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THE

APOSTOLIC METHOD

OF

Building Up Feeble Churches

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PREFACE.

The writer has been repeatedly requested by those who are interested in the work of building up feeble churches to publish a few thoughts concerning this very important department of labor. Failing health and inability, at present, to do any considerable amount of study, will perhaps serve as a sufficient excuse for offering to pastors of feeble churches so imperfect and inadequate discussion of matters so very important and so extensive as are here referred to. If this little pamphlet shall be the means of awakening interest and leading abler and more scholarly persons to continue the study of the topics here glanced at, the writer will be very thankful.

PREFATORY REMARKS.

IT IS more than thirty years since the writer made an excursion into the State of Vermont, in midwinter, to spend a few months among the weakest and most disorderly churches of the State for the purpose of studying, Bible in hand, the cause and cure of those evils which prevent prosperity. Since that time it has been his constant endeavor to ascertain and apply, from the Word of God, those truths which the Holy Spirit has revealed for the correction of those evils which prevail among feeble churches. And though the pressure of other engagements has made it impossible for him to devote the larger part of his time to this department of labor, he is happy to inform the reader that there are quite a number of churches in different parts of New England, where it has been his privilege to labor for a season, that are now in a prosperous condition, which, but a comparatively few years ago, were on the verge of extinction. One of these churches was said to be "dead and buried beyond resurrection," but now is the centre of spiritual life and activity in the town where it is located; and, but four years ago, dedicated a new meeting-house costing twelve thousand dollars. Another was so reduced by dissensions that but twelve persons could be drawn together at the first meeting which the writer conducted with them, and those would not speak to one another. But in less than three weeks forty members walked arm in arm into the long deserted sanctuary and were reunited. Several precious revivals of religion have since been enjoyed, and the church is now in a prosperous condition.

In one instance, the writer was called upon to take charge of a church, which, though located in a flourishing community, and enjoying the use of an excellent house of worship, had become so reduced, by various causes, that but twenty-five persons were usually in attendance on the Sabbath, and these were nearly all women and children. But with faithful pastoral labor, the members soon rallied, and, by employing a devoted female missionary to visit from house to house, and teach the wives

and mothers to pray for husbands and children, the way was soon prepared for preaching in the sanctuary. An evangelist was soon secured, and a precious revival of religion followed in which husbands and fathers were the first converts, and, in about one year, the Sunday school increased to nearly one hundred and fifty persons. Other instances might be mentioned in which the grace of God wrought still greater works.

The experience of these many years of labor has convinced the writer that there are no good reasons for despairing of ultimate success in building up any church of Christ, no matter how feeble, provided that there are people enough in the community in which the church is located, to admit of growth, and the measures employed are thoroughly Scriptural, and the reliance upon the Holy Spirit is constant and complete.

AN EXTREME CASE OF FEEBLENESS.

There is a town in New England where, some fifteen years since, a man sat on the ruins of the chimney of his grandfather's old dwelling, one Sunday morning, mourning over the desolation of Zion, and said, "I will have a live Baptist on my farm, and by the grace of God, will build that church up." At that time, the meeting-house was sadly out of repair and closed up. The parsonage was hardly in a fit condition for an occupant. The society was in debt. A few aged members of the church met in the vestry for prayer. Two women conducted a small Sunday school in a hamlet, six miles from the centre of the town. Now the meeting-house is in good repair. The parsonage is in fine order. The church numbers forty members, of whom one-fourth only are males. They have a good pastor, for whose support over four hundred dollars have been raised in various ways during the past year, and over one hundred dollars have been contributed for various benevolent objects. There is a Sunday school of about thirty members in one locality, and another of about forty in another locality, in addition to that at the centre of the town. In one of these quite a group of converts have recently been gathered, whose prayers and labors may save the church from extinction, and cause it to flourish.

AID FROM ABROAD, WHY NOT SUCCESSFUL.

During these fifteen years, in addition to the efforts made by the Convention, for the support of pastors and evangelists, not less than a dozen pious laymen have been introduced into the town and located on farms, by a brother who lives abroad; with a view of giving the members of the church assistance in doing evangelistic work, and in supporting public worship. But, by far, the larger portion of these had previously imbibed the prevailing sentiment of the age in which we live, viz., that the chief end of man is to obtain a livelihood, make money and enjoy the world, and obtain only so much religion as will ensure the salvation of one's own soul, and let sinners take care of themselves, or go down to death uncared for.

Unmindful of that passage of Scripture which says, "Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land and verily shalt thou be fed," these persons have, for the most part, sold out their possessions, and have gone where money making is easier, and mammon worship can be practised without having their pocket-books so heavily drawn upon for the support of the worship of Almighty God. Nor is this at all to be wondered at, for these men came from churches where the means of grace were conducted with so little reliance upon the Holy Spirit, and so much reliance upon various worldly appliances, that it would have been next to impossible for them to have obtained the impression, from the religious instruction imparted to them, that "the chief end of man is to love and obey God, and to enjoy him for ever." Hence they very naturally acquire the habit of regarding money making as the main business of life, and worshipping God a secondary matter.

It must be evident to every thoughtful Christian that it is utterly useless to try to build up any feeble church through the efforts of this class of persons. Persons of this class are not only cyphers, but they are like cyphers standing on the wrong side of the decimal point. They are in reality idolaters, and count ten against the cause Christ, in whatever place you put them, until they are converted from the error of their ways, and are brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. When this class of persons have been soundly converted from the worship of mammon to the worship of Almighty God, and have

been made to realize that the great business of life is to serve God, and save immortal souls, they can be located in the vicinity of a feeble church, and be of some use in building it up. But until a permanent and radical change is wrought in them, they are a positive hinderance to the cause of Christ, and a constant source of weakness to any church to which they may belong.

MAMMON WORSHIPPERS AND THE FINANCIAL BASIS
OF THE CHURCH.

One very important method of strengthening a feeble church is to develop a sound financial basis on which the means of grace may securely rest for support. But such a basis cannot easily be developed in any church, where the leading members have it for their chief aim in life to make money, or to enjoy the pleasures of this world. Such persons will not only make smaller contributions for the support of worship than they ought, and, by so doing, tempt others to contribute smaller sums than they otherwise would, but they will hinder the conversion of those who would be converted but for the fact that their confidence in the religion of Christ is destroyed by the sharp bargaining and the dishonest dealing of these men. These mammon worshippers thus deprive the Church of the support of many who would otherwise be converted, and would become regular contributors towards the support of worship; and, at the same time, they open the way for the introduction of fairs and festivals, in which appeal is made to the appetites and gambling propensities of the people, for the purpose of raising money, thus shifting the finances from the firm basis of religious principle and strong spiritual affection for the cause of Christ to appetite and sensual gratification, and thus destroy the real basis on which the finances should rest. This basis does not consist of the money that is in the hands of the treasurer, nor in the tact and skill which is displayed in drawing money out of the purse of the people, either at home or abroad; much less does it consist of the zeal that is sometimes manifested in the introduction of those worldly and sensual methods of raising money which appeal directly to appetite and passion, and destroy principle, and kill out the love of God from the heart,

and so destroy the very foundations of a sound financial basis. Hence it ought to be regarded as a great favor to the members of feeble churches, when God in His providence opens the way for these mammon worshippers to move out of town, and a very heavy chastisement to the church whose members are called upon to receive them into their fellowship. It is utterly useless to try to build up any feeble church where this class of men are among the leaders. While they remain on the lead, the prayers of the other members will not only be hindered, but the efforts of the pastor will be sure to be baffled; the resources obtained from abroad will be worse than wasted, and the cause of Christ will be made to languish in spite of every effort which the faithful few may put forth to make it flourish.

THE WAY PROSPERITY MIGHT HAVE BEEN SECURED.

In the town to which reference has already been made, if there had been so many as five, or even three persons, among the twelve who were introduced from abroad, who fully realized that their chief business on coming into town was to build up the cause of Christ, and had laid themselves upon God's altar a willing sacrifice, and had made their business subserve the purpose for which they were providentially brought into the town, others would have caught the same spirit, divine power would have rested upon their business, as well as upon their religious efforts, and the Church would have been strengthened. But for want of a proper conception of the real purpose which God had in view in introducing them into town, and an unwillingness to consecrate themselves and their substance to the work of building up the cause of Christ, they deprive themselves of the gracious assistance of God, both in their business and in their religious services. God cannot prosper any Christian, either spiritually or temporally, who is constantly abusing the resources which he places under his care. Christians are simply the stewards of his manifold mercies, and hence they must be true to him in the management of the trust which has been committed to them in order to prosper. And the only good reason that can be given why the members of feeble churches do not prosper in any part of the country, where there are people enough to admit of prosperity, is because they fail

to consecrate themselves and their substance to God, in the way which he has pointed out in his word. "Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the first fruits of all thy increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." "In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy steps."

These assurances from God are just as reliable as they ever were. But if a man fails to honor God with his substance and with the first fruits of all his increase, and acknowledges God only in a part of his ways, whether in business or in religion, he cannot claim the promised blessing, and hence cannot become a real power in building up the cause of Christ in any community. Hence, after ten years of persevering endeavor put forth by the few Christians who are now living in the town referred to, the church is still so feeble that if the present pastor should withdraw from the field it would be difficult to fill the position by another who is capable of taking up the work, and carrying it successfully forward. And if the Convention should withdraw its aid the doors of the meeting-house would most likely be closed. And yet the town numbers about a thousand inhabitants, and has several hamlets where neighborhood Sunday schools and prayer-meetings might be very profitably sustained. The town also has ample facilities for business, where earnest, self-sacrificing Christians could obtain a livelihood by lumbering, farming, stock raising, and other pursuits, could such persons be found who are willing to go in and improve the opportunity which the Master offers for doing missionary work.

The writer, in common with others who have contributed in any way towards the advancement of the cause of Christ in the town under consideration, feels that there is abundant occasion for gratitude, in view of the fact that we have so noble a band of disciples in the town, and that so many good results have been accomplished, and so many souls have been saved—a single one of whom is worth ten thousand times all the trial and self-sacrifice and money that have been expended in prosecuting this important enterprise. And yet it is painfully evident to every thoughtful Christian that there must be some very grave defects in the present method of organizing churches, and in conducting the means of grace in this and many other towns, or there would have been a far greater amount of good accom-

plished, and many more souls would have been saved during the space of ten years.

REASONABLE EXPECTATIONS NOT REALIZED.

One who is well acquainted with the results achieved by the disciples of Christ in the days of the apostles would naturally suppose that a church composed of a very few members, if properly organized into a suitable number of working bands, and well led by a devoted pastor, would so use the means of grace which God has placed within their hands, and so exercise their spiritual gifts, that they would secure a firm hold upon the people who live round about the church, in different parts of the town, during the course of a single year, and that in the course of ten years a sufficient number of families would be reached to add very materially to the strength of the church by the varied exercise of their gifts and graces in family worship, closet devotion, household meetings, Sunday schools and in religious visitation. There ought to be, at least, from fifty to one hundred young men and women, properly organized under their divinely appointed leaders, now actively engaged in different parts of the town, carrying the gospel to the inhabitants of the back neighborhoods, building up Christian homes, distributing religious literature, conducting prayer-meetings and Sunday schools and raising up future supporters of the means of grace. But instead of this happy state of things there are, probably, not a score of young Christians in the entire town who have family worship or closet devotion regularly in their dwellings, from day to day, or who have an idea that these services are indispensable to the cultivation of a high-toned piety; or who feel that they are under obligation to earn something for the support of the gospel, or are in duty bound to contribute of their substance regularly for the advancement of the cause of Christ; or who have any adequate conception of the responsibility which they assume when they allow the grace of their renewed hearts to languish for want of proper exercise, while neglecting to make efforts to secure the salvation of their kindred and their neighbors; much less do they feel that it is an unspeakable privilege to make great sacrifice for the purpose of building up the cause of their Master, first of all in their own

hearts, then in their homes, then in the neighborhood in which they live, then throughout the town, the State, the nation and throughout the world. And yet, it is highly probable that the disciples of Christ who live in the town now under consideration are in no respect inferior to those in scores and hundreds of other towns. But the fault is not mainly the fault of young converts, who are, or ought to be, coming constantly into the churches, and placing themselves under the leadership of the overseers of the flock of God, and who should be entering heartily into the work of evangelization, that they are not more zealously employed in the work of saving souls.

THE OVERSEERS OF THE CHURCH AT FAULT.

It is largely the fault of those who have, or who ought to have, the general oversight of the work of evangelization in the towns where these churches are located, whose duty it is to assist the pastors in laying out the work to be performed by the members, and in leading the young into the service of the Master, that the young are not more generally engaged in gospel labor in different parts of the town. In some cases, the tone of piety has declined to so low an ebb that the members have lost sight of the object for which the church is constituted. They do not realize that it is their privilege to be so pervaded by the Spirit's presence that they will be eager to ascertain whom God has chosen to be their leaders and guides in the work of evangelization, and ready to go forth to gather in the precious harvest of souls. Hence, instead of going to God in prayer, for the purpose of ascertaining whom he has been pleased to set over them in the gospel, they proceed to choose whoever they please for church officers, the same as they would in any worldly organization. As a very natural consequence, the members get divided up into little cliques and parties, whose purpose is to gratify their own tastes and preferences. The Holy Spirit is grieved away. The means of grace are abused rather than enjoyed. Impenitent men are not converted. The work of sanctification is impeded, discord and strife prevail, and the cause of Christ languishes on every hand. Where this state of things exists, it is utterly useless to look for prosperity until there is a radical change in the method of electing the officers of

the church. God has set the members in the body as has pleased Him, and when the pastor of a feeble church has so enlightened the members as to enable them to see that they have nothing whatever to do with choosing church officers; but are to give their attention very earnestly and very prayerfully and persistently to the work of ascertaining whom God has chosen, the way is prepared for the beginning of a period of prosperity, if they will follow the Scriptural method of making the selection of leaders. It stands to reason that when any body of Christians really desire to ascertain which ones of the number God has chosen to take the lead in managing affairs, if every one will studiously refrain from influencing others in any manner, and all will repair to their closets of devotion and ask God to show them whom He has chosen to take the lead, and will then take their Bibles and carefully examine those passages of Scripture which give a description of the qualifications of the men whom He requires to fill the different offices, and will then each one of them carefully write down the names of the persons who, according to their best judgment, possess the qualifications designated in the Word of God, and will then bring these lists of names together and count and compare them, the minds of the majority of the persons so doing, to say the least, will be led by the Holy Spirit to agree concerning certain persons. And there can be no possible question but that these persons are the ones whom God has chosen to take the lead. The persons who have been thus selected should be called together by the pastor, after having been consecrated to God by prayer, and should be taught to take young converts by the hand the very instant that they give evidence of having been born again, and they should set them to work, in some one or more of the various departments of religious labor, under their proper leaders. And they should be kept at work regularly, doing the will of the Master, in whatever direction his will is made known. Persons who are really born of God are not still born, nor are they born into the possession of a spirit of indifference or of apathy, much less are they born into the possession of a spirit of independence and insubordination or of isolation. They obtain these traits of character, if at all, not from the Holy Spirit, but from the older members of the church, sometimes from their parents, while lounging at home on the

Lord's day, when they should be in the house of God ; or while attending to business, when they should be conducting religious services in their own families, or in the neighborhood where they live.

THE DUTY OF THE OVERSEERS OF THE CHURCH.

It is the duty of the overseers of the church, not only to lay out the work which is to be done in different parts of the town, and to encourage the younger members to engage heartily in this work, but to yoke themselves in with the younger as true yoke fellows, who not only rejoice in bearing the larger end of the yoke, but who also rejoice in seeing the younger bear the smaller. It is also the duty of the older members to set the example of following the lead of the overseers, so that the young will learn how to obey their divinely appointed teachers. It is incumbent upon the overseers to study the Word of God very carefully for the purpose of ascertaining how the members of churches were in the habit of doing gospel labor in the days of the apostles, and so be able to keep the young from copying the ways of the world and from following the example of Christians of other denominations, who do not conform to the requirements of Christ, and from being led away from the church into those worldly organizations whose avowed aim is to reform the intemperate and the immoral, but whose real aim, in many instances, is to allure them down to death, by inducing them to sign the pledge without the grace of God, and with their hearts still set upon the enjoyment of the sinful pleasures of this world. By causing them to feel that they are as good, or perhaps, even better, than Christians are, though they have never been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, they became thoroughly deceived by the enemy of all righteousness, and trust in their good resolutions rather than in the power of God, and hence are ultimately ruined. The overseers of the church should examine the ground on which the members of the church are conducting works of benevolence and reform, as well as their religious labor, and ascertain whether they are laboring on the spiritual plane of action or upon a worldly plane, and they should carefully inspect the implements which they are using to see whether they are carnal or spiritual. In some communities there are scores and

hundreds of Christians in the immediate vicinity of many of the feeble churches, who have left the plane of the spiritual and gone down on to the plane of the natural, and are wasting their time and money in trying to tie up the depraved appetites of wicked men with blue and white ribbon, when they ought to be up on the plane of the spiritual, leading these depraved men to Christ, and showing them how to put on Christ and how to be kept from falling into vice again by the power of God through faith. And it is the duty of the overseers of the church to ascertain under whose auspices the members of the church are working, whether under the auspices of the adversary of souls or under the auspices of the Holy Spirit. And they should secure, by united prayer and fervent supplication, a drawing power that is so much more potent than the power exerted by the worldly organizations which surround the church, that the members of the church will not only be kept from uniting with these organizations, but will become so engaged in the work of saving souls and in building up the cause of Christ, that the members of these organizations will be compelled to come in and enjoy the gospel feast and not stay away and feed on husks, as they are now doing. It is not of any use for the members of the church to murmur and complain because the young are drawn away into worldly organizations. Murmurs and complaints do not remedy existing evils. It is the unspeakable privilege of the overseers of every church to obtain so much of the Spirit's presence and power, and to lift up Christ so high in the presence of the multitude that even drunkards and harlots will come pressing into the kingdom. And it is mainly the fault of the overseers of the flock if the tone of piety is so lowered that the young are drawn away from the church into other organizations. And it is also the fault of the older members that the young are induced to form religious organizations for the purpose of doing gospel labor by themselves. There ought to be a state of things in every church which will make it just as natural for the young to participate with the old in social meetings, and in all kinds of religious labor, as it is for children to partake of their daily food with their parents. And it is a grave mistake for the members of any church to imagine that they are going to remedy existing evils by forming societies in which the young are going to be deprived of the benefits which should be secured from the

leadership of those whose fervent piety and ripe experience have qualified them to take the lead. Young Christians cannot acquire the kind of experience which they need in any separate organization, no matter how good that organization may be, for the simple reason that when separated from the church or from the older members in the church, they are necessarily deprived of the benefits which should be derived from the experience of older members. These benefits are many and important and are more valuable to the young than to any other class of persons in the church. Hence, if young members are to exercise their gifts to the best possible advantage, they should be enrolled among the leaders of the church as God has given them ability to serve, and take their turn with the older members in conducting social meetings. And they should be encouraged to converse with the anxious in the inquiry meetings and household assemblies. It is undoubtedly true that the young cannot obtain that kind of experience which they need in some churches without a thorough reformation among the older members of the church such as will cause them to become ensamples to the flock. But it is utterly useless to try to produce this reformation by encouraging the young to labor by themselves. The young, when left to themselves, soon tire and begin to talk about opposing obstacles that stand in the way of success. They speak of the overshadowing influence of churches of other denominations, on the one hand, and the superior advantages of certain worldly organizations on the other hand. And, in a very short time, a portion are drawn off into some worldly organization while others give up in despair. There is always something wrong about the leadership of every church where there seems to be a demand for a separate organization for the younger members. And the way to remedy the evil is to elect the leaders in the divinely appointed way, and let them lead off in a scriptural manner and let all of the members follow their lead just so long as they follow the example of Christ and his apostles. A dozen members, organized under their divinely appointed leaders, constitute a mighty host in any community so long as they are actively engaged doing the work that God wants to have done. This number of persons, if well led, will keep a sense of duty and of obligation and of exalted privilege to work for God constantly growing and expanding in the hearts of both young and old.

And where this state of things exists, there is no difficulty in the way of prosperity but can be very easily overcome, provided that the members of the church are faithfully encouraged, and are taught to give themselves to fasting and prayer as well as to labor. Activity which is produced by mere talk does not amount to much. Indeed activity that is produced in this way deprives Christians of a proper sense of their dependence on the Holy Spirit, and very frequently prepares church members for future labor in some worldly organization, where all labor depends upon mere talk, rather than on prayer for success.

A MISTAKE OF PASTORS.

The pastors of some churches are now making the gravest of mistakes, by placing so much dependence upon talking and preaching, and so little dependence upon prayer. They see the love of their brethren waxing cold and the majority of the members becoming more and more indifferent; but, instead of repairing to their closets of devotion and asking for a double portion of the Spirit to rest upon themselves, and urging the faithful few to give themselves to prayer in like manner, they begin the work of revival by preaching and soon become so over anxious that they fairly scold, and unfit themselves and their brethren for successful effort. This course of procedure is about as consistent as the efforts of an overseer of a cotton mill would be, in case the dam had gone off, if he should take his stand by the drive wheel with a force pump in his hand and try to persuade the operatives to unite with him in forcing water up out of the stream, for the purpose of setting the mill in operation, instead of first repairing the dam and bringing the power to bear upon the drive wheel. The kingdom of heaven does not come by observation. On the contrary, God delights in taking his people by joyful surprise. He frequently comes in an hour when the great mass of people are not looking for him. And he is generally nearest when he seems to the unfaithful farthest off. He moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. His secret is with those who fear him. Hence the peculiar situation of those who are called to act as leaders in the church of God. Their duty is to discern the signs of his coming. And in order that they may be successful, they must

be both prayerful and watchful, and learn how to interpret the language of his providence by those heavenly signs which are almost certain to be misunderstood by worldly-minded persons. Hence the obligation to tarry with one accord in prayer, until endued with power from on high, is not only a very important obligation resting upon the entire membership of a church, but it is the most important obligation that can rest upon the leaders of a church in time of great declension. And they have only to encourage themselves with the assurance that God's willingness to bless at such times is always greater than the need of his blessing, in order to find words of encouragement to speak to each other and to the members of the flock generally. It is when declension is the greatest that both the Spirit and the Son of God are most deeply concerned for the welfare of the cause of Christ in every church. It is at such times that the Spirit makes intercession in groanings that can not be uttered. It is at such times that Christ intercedes, at the right hand of the Father, as at no other time. And if the leaders of the flock will only fasten upon such seasons and make them times in which they will exercise their faith, and pour out their souls in prayer, and urge others to pray in the most earnest, persistent manner, they will be certain to succeed in their endeavor to build up the cause, sooner or later. God's promises never fail.

WRONG METHODS TO BE SEARCHED OUT AND CORRECTED.

The pastor and his helpers should make it their constant aim and unwavering purpose to improve these occasions when the cause of Christ is suffering the severest declension, for the purpose of examining existing methods of doing gospel work with the view of ascertaining if there is anything in the course which is being pursued by the church at present, or which the church has been pursuing, which is opposed to God's plan and method of operations, with the intention of correcting any and every error of which the church, as a body, may be guilty. God sometimes waits to be gracious to his people, for months and even for years, in order that they may be led to see the error of their ways and repent and walk in his way. And hence the importance of conforming, just as closely as possible, to the methods of Christ and of his

apostles. These methods were ordained by God the Father, and were wrought into the lives and labors of the apostles by the Holy Spirit, and were woven into the very texture of the inspired narrative for our profit. "Ye have us for ensamples," says Paul. The Spirit of God is always prompting and inclining those who are walking in the Spirit to act in accordance with, and not contrary to, the customs and usages of the apostles. "The Lord is with you while ye be with him. But if ye forsake him he will forsake you." The Holy Spirit will not abandon the good old way of regenerating children in very early life, in answer to the prayers of godly parents who take special pains to instruct their children in the way of life, and who pray daily for their conversion, because certain parents have adopted the modern practice of handing their children over to the Sunday school teacher, and shirking the responsibility on to him. Nor will the Holy Spirit abandon the practice of making use of the personal appeals of faithful pastors, because some ministers expend all their energies in preparing and preaching able sermons, and then leaving the result with God. The Holy Spirit will be with those who, like Paul, in addition to preaching able sermons in the pulpit, go from house to house, warning every man and beseeching every man, even with tears, to be reconciled unto God. And hence, the sooner we passage our way back from the methods of modern times to the methods of labor observed by Christ and His apostles, the more converts we shall win to Christ, and the more rapidly will His cause be advanced. The lack of converts, and the spurious nature of many of the conversions that are reported by many churches in our day, are traceable directly to modern methods of evangelization. And we are never going to have either a deep toned piety, nor sound conversions, nor steadfast church members in some communities, until we seek out the old paths and walk in them. There is a growing tendency on the part of many churches to resort to those expedients by which some religious organization has swept up more hay, wood and stubble than some neighboring church. But in order to build up strong, efficient churches, it should be the constant aim and the unwavering purpose of pastors and all other church officers so to reform existing habits, customs and usages as to reproduce a thoroughly well organized apostolic church

in every community where meetings for the revival of religion are held. We need not only to cast out every worldly expedient, and every Satanic device now existing in the churches, and so give opportunity for the Holy Spirit to come in and fill the vacant space thus created ; but we ought to search and try our ways, and ask God to lead us in the way everlasting.

It is not of any use for Christians, in this age, to flatter themselves that God is able and willing to do, by means of the prayers and sermons of a single preacher, during a single half day on Sunday, the same amount of regenerating and sanctifying work that he was wont to do by means of the numerous preachers that were employed in the temple, and in the houses of the people daily, during seven days in the week, in the days of the apostles. And it is equally useless for us to expect that the Holy Spirit will accomplish the same results, by means of the modern Sunday school, without the earnest coöperation of parents, that were formerly accomplished with the prayers of both pastors and teachers, evangelists and lay helpers, both male and female, with the earnest coöperation of such parents. God has never promised to do anything of this sort. He has told us that, under certain conditions, one shall chase a thousand and two shall put ten thousand to flight. But the promise is of no avail unless the conditions are complied with. The promise is that we shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit has come upon us. And the command is, "Tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." Both the promise and the command are just as applicable to Christians in the nineteenth century as they were to these of the first century. And it is just as inconsistent for the overseers of the flock of God to try to build up the cause of Christ, in any community, without power from on high, as it would have been for the apostles to have done so. If it was necessary for them to refrain from preaching to the impenitent until the power of God rested both upon themselves and upon the impenitent, in order to ensure the best possible results, it is equally necessary for us to do so. And we have no right to expect a large number of genuine converts in any community, unless we persist in praying with one accord for the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit until the Spirit descends.

ONE OF THE GREAT SINS OF MODERN PREACHERS.

And one of the greatest sins now being committed by modern preachers of the gospel is the sin of preaching sermon after sermon to ungodly men, when they are aware of the fact that the Spirit of God is not resting mightily upon them, nor upon themselves. And to endeavor to supply the deficiency and awaken an interest by resorting to the expedient of weaving into revival meetings a large amount of artistic singing is only adding sin to sin. Singing is well enough in its place, if it be of the right kind. But it is only a snare and a trap when it is allowed to take the place of prayer and exhortation, confession and renewed consecration. It is not the amount of singing that the writer objects to, nor is it the amount of preaching and talking, but it is the order in which the preaching and the singing come into the meetings, and the purpose for which these exercises are employed. The purpose for which the extra amount of talking is used is to get the brethren to act. And the object for which the extra amount of singing is brought in is to fill up the time. And when so employed, the worshippers are either wearied and disgusted or angered, and the Spirit is grieved and insulted, and the meeting made the worse, rather than better, by these exercises. Cold-hearted Christians are never made warm by mere talk, nor even by sermons, when unaccompanied by divine power. But warm-hearted worshippers are grieved and driven away in many instances by these means. The reason why the time is not all taken up in prayer-meeting, is because the presence of the Holy Spirit is not felt in the hearts of the worshippers. The Spirit suffers the long pauses to occur in the meeting in order that the worshippers may be led to realize how much they need to feel that quickening power, by which alone a prayer and conference meeting can become really edifying. Hence, if the leader of the meeting is not spiritually minded, and fails to take cognizance of the fact that the Holy Spirit is waiting for prayer to be offered, and does not get down on his knees and pour out his desires in prayer or call on others to pray, but begins to urge the brethren to speak, or gives out a hymn to be sung, simply for the purpose of filling up the time, he takes one of the most effectual methods he can take by which to prevent them from having a good meeting.

The Holy Spirit is not only one of the persons who is really present in the meeting, but the most important one of all the persons who are in the prayer-meeting. If the pastor of a church will always bear in mind the fact when conducting a prayer-meeting, and remember that the brethren are never rightly moved except when the Holy Spirit moves them to sing or speak or pray, and will see to it that he himself is so full of the Spirit as to be able to keep full control over his own spirit, and not allow himself to get angry or displeased in any way; nor even think an unkind thought, much less give utterance to such thought, but will beseech God to help him to be very tender and sympathetic in his utterances; and will not only pray earnestly for a baptism of the Holy Spirit to rest on himself and on his brethren, but will ask his brethren to tarry with him, even after the congregation has gone home, for the express purpose of asking for a double portion of the Spirit's presence, he will ultimately succeed. The Spirit of God frequently waits for this very kind of effort, and if the pastor does not realize this fact, and endeavors to make the meeting go on in a lively manner by an extra amount of singing and a little more talking than is necessary, he will generally succeed in securing the very worst kind of a meeting they can have, viz.: a meeting which has the appearance of spiritual life, but which is in reality destitute of all real life and power. Impenitent men are going down to death by scores and by hundreds in some communities, mainly in consequence of the fact that there is an absence of that power which convinces of sin and of righteousness and of a judgment to come, and which renews and sanctifies the soul. And yet, instead of humbling ourselves in the very dust before God, and asking him to forgive us our sins, in grieving this Spirit away from our prayer-meetings and our family altars and our closets of devotion, and pleading with God to pour out his Spirit so abundantly that men will be arrested in their mad career, wherever they are, and be sent flocking to the places of worship, like doves to their windows, we seem to resort to almost every expedient that can be resorted to except the right one, in order to create an interest in our meetings for prayer and conference. As a very natural consequence, when an interest is created, it is almost invariably of the kind which God does not want created, and which becomes very ruinous to souls when it is created.

God does not want either saints or sinners to be made to feel comfortable or happy, while engaged in the performance of religious duties, unless they become so through the operation of his Spirit. He knows that the gospel of Christ is only a savor of death unto death to all who listen to it, unless it is accompanied by the Holy Spirit. And hence, he does not try to make men happy while engaged in the performance of religious duties, until they repent of their backsliding and return to him and become willing to trust in their Lord, and are ready to perform their duties in a proper manner. It is through a misunderstanding of this important truth that the members of so many churches put forth so much effort to secure fine singing and able preaching and attractive places of worship, hoping thereby to draw in the impenitent and get them within the sound of the gospel. When in these attractive resorts, they fondly expect to entertain them in such a manner that they will become so interested in the services of religion that they will learn to love and embrace the gospel of Christ. In some instances they actually do succeed in causing men to believe that they are enjoying the worship of the Lord's house and have actually become very good Christians, when, in reality, they are only enjoying the fine oratory of the preacher and the artistic skill of the singing choir, and the culture and sociability of the worshippers. They do not feel the power of the Spirit accompanying the means of grace. And yet the writer would not have places of worship any less attractive to those who come to the house of God for the purpose of enjoying the means of grace than they now are. What he objects to is, that undue reliance upon those attractions which lead the people to forget their dependence on the Holy Spirit, and which cause them to grieve him from their hearts and from the places of worship, and which tempts them to resort to any and every expedient that seems to be available, except the right one, by means of which to secure the attention of the people.

A few years ago, the writer had his attention called to a church whose doors were actually closed for want of both preacher and hearers. On going there it was found that, in addition to the more common modern appliances, a portion of the basement of the church edifice had actually been fitted up with a stage and paraphernalia of the theatre. These were being vigorously

used by the young people for the purpose of drawing in the people during the recent pastorate. The brethren were informed that it was not possible to serve the Lord and the devil at the same time in the Lord's house. A carpenter was secured and the theatricals were removed. Meetings for prayer and supplication were appointed from week to week, and kept up every day in the week. Very soon, the power of God came down on the people so mightily that hardened sinners and even drunkards, who had not attended church for years, felt obliged to leave their places of business and go to the house of prayer. Multitudes embraced the religion of Christ. And, when the preacher who had been engaged for another field of labor, for a short time, was about to retire, a member of a church of another denomination arose and said that he would pay a liberal sum of money if the preacher would return, and he might spend his whole time preaching in the Baptist-meeting house. Incidents of this sort could be named almost without number, showing how ready and willing the Holy Spirit is to listen to the cry of God's children, the instant that they cease to rely upon worldly appliances and material attractions, with which to interest the people, and begin to place their sole reliance on the power of the Holy Spirit, and seek this power on bended knees with earnest prayer. And it is awful to think of the solemnity of that day, when we shall be called upon to give account for our stewardship while conducting the means of grace without the presence of the Holy Spirit, when, but for an undue dependence on the various appliances now in use, we should have felt our need of the Spirit's power and have obtained it. Hundreds and thousands of precious souls, who are in the habit of attending church, and thousands more who live round about the church, who do not attend, perish in their sins, who would be saved with an everlasting salvation, were Christians to place their sole reliance upon the Spirit, and seek their salvation with that earnestness and zeal which the Holy Spirit would willingly produce in the hearts of his people, if his presence was sought. But the presence of the Holy Spirit never is sought while other things are relied upon for success.

THE REASON FOR EXISTING STATE OF THINGS.

And yet it is not at all surprising that this state of things exists in so many churches, when we consider how little is done by

way of directing the attention of the members of the churches to the work of seeking and saving those who do not attend upon the means of grace. The child who partakes of the bounties that are spread upon his father's table, from day to day, without ever being conducted to the dwellings of the hungry to supply the suffering with food, can not be reasonably expected to feel any considerable amount of gratitude to his parents for his daily supply of bread, nor any sense of obligation to feed the hungry. But let the parent return thanks to God at his table regularly, as if he really meant it, and then let him take the child by the hand, with a basket filled with viands fresh from his father's table, and lead him to the hut of some hungry child day by day, and allow him to see with what relish the starving child partakes of this food, and the child will soon feel that it is a great privilege to feed the hungry. And he will feel his dependence upon his parent for resources with which to enjoy this privilege. And he will have some gratitude in his heart towards his parents for his daily supply of food, and he will show his appreciation of his father's kindness by doing his father's will instead of murmuring. The same principle applies with equal force to the use that is made of the spiritual bounties that are spread upon the table of our Heavenly Father, from week to week. So long as the means of grace are conducted as they now are in many communities, without any adequate provision being made by the overseers of the church to give opportunity for church members to exercise their gifts and graces, by doing deeds of charity and benevolence and by preaching the gospel in the houses of the people, in the back neighborhoods of the country and the irreligious sections of the city, there can be no proper realization of their dependence upon the Holy Spirit and no adequate appreciation of the real worth of the means of grace, and no proper development of those gifts and graces which give strength to Christian character and joy to the Christian heart and increase to feeble churches. The low tone of piety which is now existing in very many of the weak churches has not been produced mainly by the deficiency of pulpit service, but by a deficiency in that service which should have been rendered by the members of the church, in trying to secure the salvation of the impenitent in their own families and in the families of others who belong to the church, and in those

families whose members live in neighborhoods round about the church and in different parts of the town. It is not long since the writer had his attention called to a church whose meeting-house is supplied with every facility needful for the successful prosecution of religious work and is located in the centre of a flourishing village, and yet this church was said to be practically extinct, notwithstanding the fact that its pastors have been proverbial for their practice of preaching able sermons from week to week. The writer found, on careful examination, that the members had so long been in the habit of attending upon the means of grace, simply for the purpose of being entertained by the preacher and the singing choir, that they had not only outgrown all proper sense of their obligation to coöperate with the pastor in his efforts to save souls, but had grown into such habits of indifference and inactivity in spiritual things that they had fairly lost sight of the object for which the church is constituted, and had no knowledge whatever of the scriptural method of evangelizing the community around them. It took weeks to get them to understand the first principles of church organization and of evangelistic effort.

And it was with great difficulty that a few of them were persuaded to repair to their closets of devotion, and ask God to show them, by his Spirit, how to make out a list of the names of those whom God had set in the body as has pleased him, in order that they might lead the other members out into the work of evangelization, and assist the pastor in gathering in the harvest, which for years had been ready for the sickle. There are churches in abundance, in New England, whose members have enjoyed able preaching for years, but where the tone of piety has sunk so low, in consequence of hearing able sermons and doing nothing by way of putting those sermons in practice, that even a moderate sized prayer-meeting cannot be maintained on Sunday evening, and it is with difficulty that an audience of respectable size can be gathered, during a single half day, notwithstanding the fact that large sums of money are paid out yearly for the purpose of hiring operatic singers to assist the pastor in entertaining the audience. In one town the pastor had just five persons at the prayer-meeting on the evening that a fifty thousand dollar opera-house was dedicated. This, of course, was just what ought to have been expected in a community

where both the preaching and the singing had been conducted for many years without proper reliance upon the Holy Spirit, and with the view of affording an entertainment which would draw the people to the house of God. There are many churches in our day whose services on the Lord's day are far better calculated to fit men for the opera than for heaven. How long this state of things will be suffered to continue in these churches, God only knows. But while they do continue, vice will continue to stalk abroad through the streets, and riot in the saloons, and stagger along the avenues of the city. The young will go fishing and gunning on the Lord's day, in the back neighborhoods in the country when the weather is fair, and they will meet in vacant stores and dilapidated dwellings with their cards and their cigarettes and their cider and their whiskey; and will grow up without God and without hope in the world, and, sooner or later, will become the inmates of the poorhouse, the jail, the prison and the insane asylum, where they must be supported, for the most part, by the hard earnings of the industrious and frugal, or else they will become the inmates of the dramshop, saloon and the brothel, while the piety of church members is dwarfed and enfeebled for want of proper exercise; and the churches will be still further enfeebled for want of the converts who should be gathered in from these sin-cursed neighborhoods, and the material resources which should be drawn from the various industrial pursuits, which should take the place of the brothels and saloons and gambling-dens, which now swallow up such enormous sums of money, drawn directly or indirectly from the purses of professing Christians, who live in habitual neglect of known duty, in order that they may lounge about their dwellings during those portions of the Lord's day which should be expended in doing deeds of charity and in performing works of evangelization.

THE COST OF THIS NEGLECT TO DO EVANGELISTIC WORK.

It is highly probable that the members of evangelical churches are suffering the loss of four times as much property annually by taxation, fraudulent bargaining, defective labor, drunkenness, and by charitable contributions given for the support of the poor, and by losses sustained through the credit

system, as would be required to sustain prayer-meetings, Sunday schools, industrial schools and home circles in those neighborhoods where these criminals and paupers are being reared, and have been rearing for the last half century. These people are located, in some instances, within a stone's throw of the meeting-house, and yet they seldom or never attend church and never have the gospel preached to them in their dwellings, and seldom, if ever, are invited to attend worship on the Sabbath or during the week. In other cases, they live between two villages, where the members of neighboring churches might meet on equal terms and form missions which would be a band of union between the churches, and would afford opportunity for the exercise of the gifts and graces of the members of both churches. There are students in abundance in our theological seminaries, whose services could be secured for a mere pittance throughout the entire summer, preaching the gospel or teaching in the Sunday school and visiting from house to house. And, in those cases where the small sum needed for the payment of board and travelling expenses cannot be raised on the ground, students for the ministry may often be found whose employment before commencing their preparatory studies is the same as that of the leading men doing business in the village or hamlet where these missions should be established. And these men would willingly labor during the day, through the week, for a reasonable compensation, and teach or preach every Sabbath, if the pastors of the neighboring churches would only take the trouble to invite these young men to enter these fields, and ask the business men to give them employment. The writer has actually known an instance in which a young man engaging to preach for his board, for three months during the summer, found his labors so blest that he was called and settled as pastor with a salary of five hundred dollars the following year, and in a few years this young man was settled over a large church with a salary of one thousand dollars and parsonage. It is frequently remarked concerning young men, on entering the ministry, that they lack that practical knowledge which business men very naturally acquire by coming in frequent contact with men and things, while prosecuting their business pursuits. The opportunity now afforded the young men at our theological schools to go

out and preach or teach or labor with their hands wherever God in his providence may open the way, during their vacation, ought not to be overlooked by either pastor or laymen if they have any interest whatever in the welfare of the young men who are studying for the ministry, or for the churches which they will be called to serve in the future. These young men very much need both the compensation which they can secure and the discipline which they may acquire. And so long as it is a well known fact that, wherever there are people enough in a back neighborhood, or hamlet, to meet together and talk business, or to enjoy some kind of sinful amusement, there are enough to meet for the worship of Almighty God, or for the instruction of children and youth in Sunday schools; there ought not to be any difficulty whatever in securing employment for every student in our theological seminaries, during the entire summer vacation, if pastors of churches and leading church members will give this matter the proper amount of thought, and take the pains to inform the professor who has charge of this department of such openings as are within their knowledge.

The inhabitants of the most benighted neighborhoods have only to be thoroughly enlightened and Christianized, in order to cease to be a source of public and private expense, and become valuable contributors in supporting the preaching of the gospel and efficient aids in paying off the town and county debts, which now are so burdensome to the industrious and upright citizens. These debts have been accumulating in many towns precisely in proportion as the churches have declined. Real estate is not now worth one-half as much as it was ten years ago, in some towns, in consequence of the fact that the migration of a few of the most pious families has been followed by the coming in of those who are given to habits of drunkenness and other vices. The children and youth who are growing up in the worst neighborhoods very naturally associate, more or less, with the children of pious parents both in the day school and in the pleasures and pursuits of every day life. In some instances they inter-marry. In other cases, they lead the children of the pious from the paths of virtue, and thus compel Christians to make an immense outlay of time and money in behalf of their own children, in paying doctors' bills, in consequence of sickness

brought on by exposure or by vice, and also in paying lawyers' fees and bills contracted at the stores for intoxicating drinks and for other injurious things. Vast sums of money belonging to members of churches are worse than thrown away, which might be turned into those channels where the money would be highly useful, if the means of grace had been vigorously used during the last quarter of a century, in those neighborhoods which are still shunned and neglected by those members of the churches whose piety is suffering for want of exercise, which these fields offer.

WHY CHRISTIAN PARENTS ARE ANNOYED BY THE WAY-
WARDNESS OF THEIR CHILDREN.

One of the principal reasons why so many Christian parents are suffered to experience the annoyance and vexation which arise from the waywardness and prodigality of their own sons and daughters is because they suffer their own piety to decline to so low a point, in consequence of their refusal to engage in work of evangelization, that they are not able to exert any really good influence over their children at home. A man can exert no salutary influence over his own family, who follows his business pursuits with such zeal that he has no time to devote to the work of evangelizing the irreligious neighborhoods of the town where he lives, even if he does attend church during a single half day on Sunday. Such attendance is but little better than solemn mockery in the eyes of those who know that his only real excuse for not giving attention to the spiritual welfare of the impenitent is his worldliness. And it is for this reason that Christian parents frequently become the chief stumbling blocks that stand in the way of the conversion both of their own children and of the children of others. Their influence, in many cases, is worse, by far, than as though they had never made a profession of religion. The time now spent in framing excuses for the neglect of public worship and the support of the gospel and the neglect of family worship by some professors of religion, if spent in evangelizing the irreligious neighborhoods, would do more by way of convincing the rising generation that there is a divine reality in religion than all the able sermons which their pastors can preach concerning this

subject. The young are not fools. If they see their parents working habitually so hard during the week that they have time and strength sufficient to hear but a single sermon on the Lord's day, and a disposition to criticise that rather than put the sermon in practice, they very naturally come to the conclusion that their parents have not got any religion that is worth having. And believing, as they generally do, that their parents are as good as any other professors of religion, they very naturally make up their minds that there is no reality in religion. But let these parents do only a reasonable amount of labor during the week and close up their business at a very early hour on Saturday, and retire to rest at an early hour on Saturday night, in order that they may have strength enough and zeal enough to attend church and the neighborhood or household meeting also, and take their children with them, and let them see with what zeal they prosecute the work of evangelizing the irreligious neighborhoods, and they will soon find that their pastors have no occasion whatever to preach sermons in order to prove that there is a divine reality in religion. Their own children and the children of the ungodly will be living epistles known and read of all who are acquainted with them concerning this doctrine. And God will bless them while engaged in their business. And with the increased income thus obtained, many of the feeble churches will be able to dispense with the aid now received from the Convention, and allow the money now received to be used in other more needy fields. There are scores and hundreds of churches in different parts of the country, now receiving aid from Conventions, where the resources needful for the support of the gospel are ample, provided that they were available. These resources would very soon become available, if the members would first seek the salvation of the people who live in the community round about. A renewed consecration of the members of the church to the great work of saving souls is about all that is needed in some cases to place these resources upon God's altar.

THE CHASTISEMENTS OF GOD ARE SURE TO FOLLOW
NEGLECT.

God makes no mistakes when meting out his rewards and punishments to those who profess to be his children. His

purpose is to take four-fold from the portion of those who defraud him out of any part of the time, money, effort, health and strength that may be needed for a successful accomplishment of the work which he assigns to the Church. And he leaves it for the members to determine whether they will cheerfully render the portion which he justly and beneficently claims for religious purposes, and live in the constant enjoyment of his favor, both at home and abroad, with a hundred fold more than they would otherwise receive in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting ; or whether they will live in a state of misery and wretchedness, produced by their disobedience, and the consequent withdrawal of his favor, and the constant annoyance and vexation arising from frequent overwork and mismanagement, while prosecuting their business in an improper manner. The recording angel of God makes a perfectly accurate record of all our transactions, both with God and with man, day by day and hour by hour. He can tell to a farthing precisely how much property must be taken from every worldly-minded Christian, in order to make the account even when the fourfold of the sum of which God has been robbed, in consequence of withholding what was due, is restored. He knows every hour of holy time that has been given to idle indulgence or sinful lounging or unhallowed toil or carping criticism or injurious fault-finding. And the blasted crops and blighted fruits and burned up dwellings, sunken ships, devastated fields, poor health and shattered nerves and aching limbs all have their place in God's school of discipline. These things are sure to be meted out in full measure, sooner or later, to those of his children who fail to make good use of the various instrumentalities and the golden opportunities which he places in their hands as stewards of his manifold mercies. And the Christians of this generation err greatly if they suppose that they can rob God of any portion of the time, talent, money, strength, energy, grace, much less of the right use of that divine power which he freely offers them, simply for the asking, without receiving the proper measure of chastisement for so doing.

The awful register goes on,
The account will surely come.

REVOLUTIONS AND THE NEGLECTED CLASSES.

It is a matter of history that insurrections and revolutions generally proceed from the neglected classes. And it is to be feared that the time is rapidly approaching when God will suffer those very men who are now growing up in the most irreligious portions of the city, and the neglected districts of the country, to rise in rebellion against the government, and apply the torch to the dwellings of the most wealthy, and to the churches which they have built for the more cultivated and refined portion of the community. God is no respecter of persons. And hence when he sees the members of the most wealthy churches declining to preach the gospel to the poor and the needy, while at the same time they expend large sums of money in ornamenting their churches and their dwellings, in such a way as to produce envy or jealousy in the minds of the poor, while at the same time they open the way for the decrease of piety and the increase of crime in the country, by compelling the most needy portion of the churches to dispense with the services of a pastor or share with another church in the services of a single man for want of means to pay for the services of a pastor, and thus depriving the people of the full benefit arising from pastoral labor, in towns where the irreligious portion of the community has become so numerous as to really demand the services of two religious teachers, instead of half of the services of one, if any progress is to be made in the work of evangelization, God cannot look with approbation upon this course of procedure. He is now suffering those men who are neglected by Christian people to organize themselves under the leadership of some of the worst men there are in the community where they live. And he allows them to desecrate the Sabbath by listening to their pernicious harangues in order that Christians may take warning and repent of their neglect of these men before it is too late to avoid the threatened judgments.

We have only to reach another great crisis in the business affairs of the country in order to find ourselves confronted by men who are thoroughly organized and fully equipped and prepared for any service in which their leaders may order them to engage, whether it be the plundering of our markets and granaries, or robbing our dwelling-houses, or destroying our

churches. A man needs no prophetic gift in order that he may be able to tell what must shortly come to pass, if the churches of Christ are allowed to continue in a state of decline, and the great mass of laboring men are suffered to form such habits that the greater part of their earnings are expended for intoxicating drinks and for other means of sensual indulgence. These men will be found in readiness to act under the leadership of the worst demagogues and anarchists and socialists that are to found in the country in every great crisis. In many places the laboring men are not only organized as never before, but they are desecrating the Sabbath as never before. And they are giving themselves up to the pernicious advice of the very worst of their leaders as never before. And they are being taught to hate and despise the churches of Christ as never before in some communities. In the meantime, in many of the communities where churches are feeble, the homes of professing Christians are being demoralized as never before by the influx of fashionable summer boarders, by Sunday excursions and various entertainments which are gotten up for the benefit of those who go to the mountains and to the seaside for recreation and for amusement and for dissipation. The religious habits of some of the very best members of the churches in the rural towns are completely broken up for weeks and months in order to accommodate visitors who care nothing for family worship and church going, nothing for temperance or good morals.

And while these changes are going on in the homes of Christians, summer hotels are springing up, as if by magic. These are supplied with every demoralizing agency that can be found that will minister to the sensual gratification of those who patronize them. The influence which is being exerted by these various agencies is not only sapping the very life out of the piety of church members, but it is depriving their children of the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit by causing parents to restrain prayer and neglect family worship during the week, and by absenting themselves from public worship on the Lord's day. And not only so, but these different agencies are opening the way for children and youth to enter upon a life of dissipation at a very early age, and preparing them to follow such a life with intense eagerness. In some communities, children and

youth are being swept with irresistible power away from the family altar and from the house of God, and even from home itself, and borne into the very jaws of destruction by the tide of dissipation. In other cases this tide is so strong that it is fairly sweeping both church and home out of existence and supplying their places with the fashionable boarding-house and the theatre, the saloon and the brothel and the gambling den. And as an inevitable consequence, the time will speedily come when the children of this generation must reap as they are now sowing unless God, in his mercy, interposes in their behalf, in answer to the prayers of the faithful few who are now endeavoring to build up those feeble churches which constitute the only real safeguard now remaining in many communities.

FUTURE RETRIBUTION.

The chastisements of God, so far forth as the truly righteous are concerned, are confined to this life. But there are many professors of religion in our day who are not truly righteous, but, like Judas of old, have united with the church without ever having been born of the Holy Spirit, and are always ready to whine about the wasted ointment whenever the people of God are about to devise liberal things for their Lord and Master, by making heavy outlay of time and money for the evangelization of the most irreligious districts of the city and the back neighborhoods of the country. And the time is coming when the Head of the Church will gather up the hundreds and the thousands of people who have grown up in these sin-cursed localities, and are now sleeping in the graves of paupers and drunkards and harlots and murderers and gamblers, who might have been saved with an everlasting salvation, had the gospel been preached to them in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power, and having placed them in solemn array before those men who have shaped the policy of the churches and have prevented the members from going forth to preach the gospel to these neglected ones through their covetousness, he will say unto them, "Inasmuch as ye have not done it unto the least of these, ye have not done it unto me." He will then direct their attention to their own sons and daughters who might have been saved but for their unhallowed examples, and

would have become co-workers with God in saving others if their parents had been faithful to them, but in consequence of their neglect have become as guilty and as hell-deserving as others, and he will show these parents the record which his recording angel has made of the extravagant outlay for costly furniture, sumptuous food, fine equipage and unhallowed pleasures which have been the means of ruining these sons and daughters. He will then bid them to depart from him into everlasting punishment. If this vast expenditure which professing Christians, who constitute the leading members of these churches in some cases, are now making simply for the gratification of their depraved appetites had been expended in home evangelization and for foreign missions, the people of this great nation would have become emphatically that people whose God is the Lord, and they would have blessed the nations of the earth with such glorious manifestations of divine power and saving grace as the world has never yet seen.

A PROMINENT CAUSE OF THE INCREASE OF CRIME.

It has become quite common, of late, for certain lecturers to charge the increase of crime and pauperism in our cities and manufacturing towns, mainly, to the keepers of saloons and dramshops. But this course of procedure is altogether deceptive and misleading. The men who keep these places of sinful indulgence and sensual gratification constantly open for the purpose of making money are unquestionably guilty beyond all estimate, and their course of life is destructive to the morals of the people beyond all power of human computation. And yet it may be safely questioned whether the influence exerted by these men is, in reality, either more ruinous or more destructive to the cause of truth and righteousness than the conduct of those professors of religion who introduce into their parlors and church festivals those games of chance which give their children their first lessons in gambling, and other hurtful practices which prepare them for the saloon and the gambling den and the theatre and the brothel. The saloon and the gambling den do not use the sanctity of our holy religion to give force and effectiveness to the lessons which are taught by the evil practices which are going on among their inmates. And the ravages

caused by the inmates of these dens of infamy are necessarily confined, for the most part, to those who are already ruined and degraded. But the evil practices which are indulged in by those professors of religion who introduce games of chance into their parlors and church festivals are the means of depriving the most cultured and refined young people there are among us of the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, which ought to come upon them in answer to the prayers of their parents, and which would be graciously bestowed, both upon them and upon saloon keepers and gamblers even, if these professors of religion would spend the time, now given up to these evil practices, in prayers for the descent of the Holy Ghost, as did the disciples on the day of Pentecost. The parlors and sanctuaries of these professors of religion are thus converted into the very hot-beds of Satan, in which the seeds of gambling and surfeiting are germinated, preparatory to transplanting in the saloon and gambling den, when they ought to be made the birth-place of immortal souls. And this nefarious work is frequently carried on at the very time when the minds of the young are most tender and susceptible. And the work of ruin is wrought so stealthily that it is scarcely thought of by these parents until it is accomplished. And not only so, but this nefarious work is frequently begun long before any attempt is made by parents to secure the regeneration of these victims of deception. And the work is done in such a way as to make it very easy for the adversary of souls to make his victims believe that they have experienced a real change of heart when they have not, and thus to hold them in his snare and to continue to deceive them with a false hope, when, as a matter of fact, they are lovers of pleasure more than of God. They vainly imagine that they are doing God's service because they are paying out their money for the support of the gospel, when in reality the money is paid for the purpose of gratifying their gambling propensities and lusts. The adversary of souls deceives them in this way to bring them into a condition in which they will have neither a desire to support religion nor means with which to support it, nor even to support themselves or their families, much less to support their aged parents in time of need.

The writer recently met the son of a church member, who was himself once the member of a Baptist church, who frankly con-

fessed that he had squandered more than ten thousand dollars in gambling, and is now utterly penniless with a wife and children depending upon him. And yet he acquired his first lesson in gambling in a game of chance played solely for amusement. There are hundreds and thousands of young men and young women now in saloons and in gambling dens, who might, and ought to have been, soundly converted to God through the prayers of their parents, who obtained their very first lessons in the practices which have wrought their eternal ruin under the tuition of their parents in the parlor and in the church edifice, and at the very time when those parents ought to have been imparting those lessons of heavenly wisdom, which secure the salvation of the soul, and which tend to prepare the young for their future work as champions in the cause of truth and temperance. No intelligent Christian for a moment doubts that God would have holden those disciples who met in the upper room in Jerusalem responsible for the ruin of the three thousand souls who were converted on the day of Pentecost under the preaching of the apostle if, instead of continuing with one accord in prayer for the descent of the Holy Spirit, they had whiled away the time by playing games of chance, instead of beseeching God to pour out his Spirit upon them. And if drunkenness and gambling had increased on every hand, as they are now increasing, in the vicinity of those churches where the members are accustomed to indulge in games of chance in their parlors and in their church festivals, no intelligent person would for a moment hesitate to charge the blame, mainly and directly, upon the disciples who met in the upper room rather than upon the keepers of saloons and gambling dens. And there ought to be so much of the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the members of every church in the land, where these evil practices are indulged in, as would enable them to clearly see that they are making themselves responsible, not only for the ruin of their own children, but to a certain extent even for the ruin of very many of the saloon keepers, whom they now charge with the crime of ruining their sons and daughters; for these very men, who are often invited to purchase tickets in lotteries gotten up for the support of worship by the members of feeble churches, would many of them be converted to God if these members would follow the example of the dis-

ciples who continued with one accord in prayer until they were endued with power from on high. The saloon keeper knows nothing of the grace of God nor of the saving power of the gospel, and has been kept from knowing about these all important realities in consequence of the inconsistency and the neglect of these false hearted professors of religion who restrain prayer and indulge in games of chance in their dwellings. And hence, their responsibility, though tremendous, is nowhere near so great as that which is assumed by those professors of religion, who, instead of repenting of their sins and humbling themselves in the dust before God, continue right on in the course which they are now pursuing, oftentimes to the utter neglect of those seasons of prayer which God has appointed for the purpose of securing the out-pouring of his Spirit upon the perishing masses. There should be a tone of piety in the dwelling of Christians so high that their children will not only be soundly converted at the earliest possible period in which regeneration can take place, but a tone of piety which will result in awakening in them a holy enthusiasm in the great work of saving souls, and cause them to go with their parents to the haunts of vice and wretchedness, and preach the gospel to those who are now rushing down to the world of despair. When the enemy comes rushing in like a flood, God has promised to lift up a standard against him by his Spirit. And, if Christians had been wide awake and up and doing during the last quarter of a century, instead of being half asleep and totally indifferent to some of the most important claims of God, they would have so besieged the throne of grace that the power of God would have come down upon the keepers of saloons and dram-shops so mightily that they would have been converted by hundreds and even by thousands, thus sweeping those vile dens, which now allure men down to destruction, completely out of existence, and making their wretched inmates champions of the cause of truth and righteousness. And the principal reason why many of the churches are now so weak and so helpless that they can scarcely stand alone in the communities where they are located is because the strength of the members has been enervated, in consequence of their persistent indulgence in games of chance, fairs and festivals, which are gotten up professedly for the support of worship, but really for the purpose of gratifying their

carnal appetites. When God suffered the church in Jerusalem to be weakened by the temporary triumph of the powers of darkness by the crucifixion of his dear Son, and then commanded the members of the church to repair to the upper room and there tarry in prayer and pour out their supplications with one accord until they were endued with power from on high, and then graciously permitted them to witness the accession of three thousand soundly converted men and women in a single day, he was simply teaching the disciples of Christ for all time precisely how to overcome that weakness which is brought on by the temporary triumph of the adversary of souls. The members of feeble churches have only to follow the example of those early disciples, in order to obtain similar results and secure the immediate strengthening of the church. The greatest want there is, in some communities, is for the pleasure-seeking Christians to be taken kindly by the hand, and be made to see that they stand in precisely the same relations to God, and to those works of grace which the feeble churches so imperatively need, that the disciples in the upper room would have stood if instead of prayer and supplication they had given themselves to the practice of games of chance and kindred indulgences. In many instances, it is because professors of religion are indulging themselves in those very same kinds of sinful gratification, in a moderate way, which gamblers and drunkards are indulging in with the most abandoned excesses, while at the same time they cherish a spirit of indifference or apathy, or it may be a spirit of hostility rather than of pity towards these abandoned men, and refuse to pour out their souls in prayer in their behalf and do not warn and rebuke them, nor try to alarm them of their danger and persuade them to repent of their wickedness, that God suffers these vile dens of infamy to remain among us and allows so many of the sons and daughters of professors of religion to be beguiled and led astray by the inmates of the saloon and the brothel and the theatre.

The sons and daughters of those parents who are really faithful to God and to their children are seldom, if ever, drawn away and ruined by these vile seducers. Nor does God willingly suffer the young to be allured and drawn away from the paths of virtue, in any case. On the contrary, it is always a matter of great grief to him, as well as a heavy chastisement

to those parents who are unfaithful, and who allow the seeds of gambling and dissipation to be sown in the hearts of their children while indulging in games of chance and other sinful practices in the parlor of their dwelling and in the house of God. God's purpose in these heavenly chastisements is to alarm other parents of their danger, and to cause them to put forth every effort in their power in order to secure the earliest possible conversion of their children, and develop in them such positive love of the worship of the sanctuary and such hatred of the saloon, and such pity for the saloon keeper, that their children will become champions in the great work of salvation, instead of becoming the victims of the saloon keeper and the gambler. Parents who never make any sacrifice of ease or comfort in order that they may have means with which to aid in the support of feeble churches, but always have money enough to gratify their natural appetites in the festivals that are gotten up for the purpose of defraying expenses, which ought to be cheerfully met by voluntary contributions, often flatter themselves that they are just as good Christians as others. And they are apt to think that their children are, if possible, even better than the children of other Christians, and very much better than the children of saloon keepers. Sometimes they imagine that they are so good that they do not need to be converted nor even to be prayed for. How else is God going to be able to break up this false delusion, and show them the peril that they themselves and their children are in, except by allowing them to see the church to which they belong sinking lower and lower in its decline, in spite of the efforts of the faithful few to sustain it, while the saloon and the gambling den are constantly swallowing up their victims, drawn directly from the ranks of the professedly pious? He has told us plainly enough in his word that we can not serve God and mammon, and commands us to crucify the old man with his affections and lusts, and come out from the world and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing. And yet there are professors of religion not a few, in our day, who really think that they can indulge in the use of wine at their tables and allow their children to enjoy the parlor dance and progressive euchre and card playing in their dwellings and practise games of chance in their church festivals, and still become very good Christians and be saved. God allows them to take their

chosen course and learn by sad experience whether his word is true or not.

When the writer was a boy, there lived in the neighborhood where he resided a family of four persons. The father and mother and one son were members in good standing in the same church. The remaining son was an amiable young man, but made no profession of religion. The family moved in good society and lived in good style. The father and mother were among the more prominent members of the church and the father frequently went out to supply pulpits on the Lord's day. It was well known that they had wine on their table, and the mother was warned of her danger again and again by the more devoted members of the church. But she spurned the very idea of being ruined or ruining her sons by the use of so harmless a thing as a glass of wine when taken with their food. She even argued as many now do, that the way to keep the young from the saloon was to allow them to have a few of those indulgences which some call harmless at their homes. Time rolled on. One of those sons, the one who belonged to the church, became a drunkard and died in delirium tremens. The father also became a drunkard and died in the insane asylum. The mother acquired such an appetite for strong drink that she actually bought it and kept it secreted in milk cans or whatever vessel she could obtain, when denied the use of her favorite beverage, and finally died in an intoxicated condition, in consequence of setting her clothes on fire after she had retired at night. All the three members of this family, who made profession of religion, now fill drunkards' graves. Can any intelligent person doubt, for a single moment, that it is the purpose of an all-wise and merciful God to startle and arouse those professors of religion who are now living in a state of careless indifference to the claims of the gospel, who flatter themselves that they can be of real service to the cause of Christ, and still have so little confidence in God that they do not believe that he is able to keep their children from being drawn away into the saloon and the gambling den? God acts on the principle that where sin abounds, grace ought to abound all the more, and where much has been given, much ought to be required. Hence, if our children are in any respect superior to the children of the ungodly, it is but reasonable that parents should teach them

to refrain from the practice of those vices which, in their incipient form, oftentimes lay the very foundation of the character of those who become the very vilest and the wickedest of the men and women who maintain the brothel and the gambling den. These parents ought to impart to them that instruction, and secure for them that grace, even in their earliest years, which will cause them to hate those things which the carnal appetite craves and enable them to become champions of virtue and cause them to stand in the front rank among those who, by the grace of God, are destined to sweep the saloon and the gambling den off the face of the earth and convert the haunts of vice and misery into beautiful Christian homes.

It is for want of this kind of training and in consequence of the fact that so many of the professedly pious are wholly given up to the eager pursuit of the pleasures of this world, that the pastors of feeble churches are not only left to struggle on alone, doing in many instances not only the work which properly belongs to them to do, but the greater part of that which should be done by the leading members of the church, but it frequently happens that the pastor is obliged to abandon the field, in consequence of ill health brought on by overwork, or is forced to retire at the very time when his services are most needed, and when, as a matter of fact, he is almost the only member in the church who is making any considerable sacrifice of time, comfort, ease or money, for the support of the church over which he is the pastor.

The reader may think, perhaps, that the writer is stating the matter rather strongly, but he speaks from personal observation, and with much experience. The truth is there are churches in abundance, in different parts of the country, where the leading members are so absorbed in their worldly pursuits and so given to the indulgence of their natural appetites, in the various worldly organizations to which they belong, that they have come almost instinctively to feel that they have no time to attend to the subject of religion, either at their homes or in the place of public worship, except during the single half day in which their attention is engaged for an hour or so by the preacher and the singing choir. And when this state of things exists everything has to be attended to by the pastor, or else it is

Prefatory Remarks.

not attended to at all. And because the pastors have been so long in the habit of attending to everything, the habit has grown up with the brethren of looking to them to attend to everything while they sit still and enjoy the means of grace. In one instance the leading members of the church told the writer that their church was like a train of cars. The pastor was not only locomotive and fireman, but engineer and conductor. All the rest of the members sit in the train and ride. And hence it not unfrequently happens that it is simply because the pastor is doing so much, and the members are doing so little, that the change in the pastoral office is brought about.

BOY'S PLAY.

Indeed the efforts which are now being made to build up the cause of Christ in some communities are so thoroughly unscriptural and so very childish withal, that the writer can scarcely refrain from comparing them to the efforts of a group of half-grown boys who were endeavoring to play soldier. Their number was very small, only fourteen all told. And yet all wanted to be in some position where they could command and give directions to the movements of the army, while no one wanted to serve in the capacity of a private soldier. Hence each resolved that he would fill some office. And they went on creating self-appointed officers with one consent, until about every office that could be thought of, from commander-in-chief down to the corporal and even the drilling-master, was in possession of some one. And the drilling-master, being a little more shrewd than the others, discovered that there were thirteen officers and one private in the entire company, and, having the majority on his side, he persuaded them to resolve that he should have the privilege of drilling all of the members for a while, at least, and then each officer should take his turn in drilling the private members, and, as a very natural consequence, they drilled that one man until they fairly killed him.

The feebleness of very many of the churches of our day grows directly out of the practice of allowing so many self-appointed officers to take upon themselves the responsibility of telling the minister what to do and how to do it, instead of going to him, as to their divinely appointed leader, and asking him what

he thinks the Head of the Church would have them do, or asking him to call a meeting of the officers of the church for the purpose of asking God to show them what he wants to have done, and when they have obtained the answers of their prayers setting themselves resolutely to work under the supervision of the pastor. It frequently is the case, in some churches, that a single man has had the ordering and directing of affairs for years, and he generally manages in such a way that there is more or less dissatisfaction on the part of other prominent members. This dissatisfaction frequently results in the withdrawal of valuable members. In other cases it results in a constant shifting of pastors. In most cases where the members of a church become so frequently dissatisfied with the minister that he is obliged to leave in comparatively a short time after he settles over a church, there is some one man who acts the part of a supervisor or drilling master, and takes it upon himself to order and direct affairs of the entire church the same as he would his own private business. Everything moves along well enough until he gets dissatisfied. He then exerts his influence in such way as to make the pastor very uncomfortable by persuading first one and then the other to take sides against him. Sooner or later the pastor is fairly exhausted and worn out in consequence of the continual fault finding, and the persistent endeavor which he makes to gratify the wishes of those who call for the able sermons, and at the same time expect the pastor to attend to the endless multitude of details which he never ought to be suffered or allowed to give his attention to on any account, except by way of general oversight of those whose duty it is to attend to them, but which, for want of the proper attention by the proper subordinate officers of the church, the pastor is frequently obliged to attend to in person, or else allow the cause of Christ to suffer in those very directions where ruin and disaster are certain to follow if these matters are not promptly and vigorously attended to by him.

It frequently happens that the change in the pastoral office is made on precisely the same principle that patients sometimes act when the family physician discovers the fact that disease has been engendered, in consequence of taking too much highly seasoned food and too little of bodily exercise, thus producing a very capricious appetite and very bad digestion. The

doctor no sooner orders lighter food and more exercise than they tell him to leave. They then go straightway and look up a physician who will give them richer and more abundant food and allow them to take even less exercise than before. And as a very natural result, the appetite grows more and more capricious, and the digestive powers weaker and weaker and the general health poorer and poorer until the time at length comes when the patient is beyond all possible hope of recovery. And this is the actual condition of things now existing in multitudes of churches at the present time. The members of the church have had so much able preaching and so little exercise of their spiritual gifts in evangelistic labors and deeds of charity and benevolence, that they are fairly dying with spiritual dyspepsia. They think that if they could only obtain a pastor who would preach able sermons and draw in the young people, and get up fairs and festivals, and give a course of lectures with the magic lantern, the meeting-house would fill up; the young would be kept from the theatre and the saloon, and the cause of Christ would flourish, when as a simple matter of fact, the present indifference and apathy among the members of the church has been produced, for the most part, by listening to sermons without doing anything either at home or abroad to give proper exercise to the graces of the new heart, or making any adequate effort to secure the presence of the Holy Spirit to accompany the sermons that are preached and to apply them to the heart and the conscience. The changing and shifting of pastors that is constantly going on all over the country is not produced by the Spirit of God acting upon the hearts of the spiritual minded members, as a general rule, but by the adversary of souls acting upon the minds of worldly minded professors of religion and pleasure seeking, ungodly men. And it is not from any lack of ability or of devotion to the proper work of the ministry on the part of pastors in the majority of cases, but it is mainly in consequence of a lack of consecration on the part of leading members of the churches, and an unwillingness to engage heartily in the work of evangelization in the community where they reside. There are feeble churches in abundance whose members have been preached to until they are well nigh preached into their graves, and yet they clamor for more and better preaching, who next to the baptism of the Holy

Spirit need nothing so much as to have a pious and devoted deacon and deaconess sent among them, and teach them how to show piety first at home by rearing the thrown down family altar, and by entering into their closets of prayer and agonizing for the souls of their children, and how to guide the affairs of their households and their business in such a way as to secure time for proper attendance upon the means of grace on the Lord's day and during the week, and how to do evangelistic work.



FEMALE PREACHERS AND THE CHURCH.

II.

It has generally been the custom of those who have had charge of the work done by the convention among the feeble churches to encourage and assist the churches in the support of pastors and evangelists, who are especially called to preach the gospel in the church, and not those who are called of God to preach the gospel more especially in the household assemblies and in the homes of the people. The consequences have been that a very considerable portion of the outlay made by the convention has been expended in preaching the gospel to empty pews and stony ground hearers, rather than to full pews and good ground hearers. And as a very natural and inevitable consequence the work of revival and upbuilding, if indeed there has been any such revival, has begun in the meeting-house rather than in private dwellings, and has been confined very largely to the church edifice rather than to the family altar and the closet of prayer. And the converts have been gathered largely from the families of church members rather than from irreligious families, and when baptized, they have been left to shrivel up and die like newly grafted scions when set in trees where they are sure to be overshadowed by wild branches, in consequence of the fact that they have not been placed under the watch care of nursing fathers and nursing mothers. The reason why our blessed Lord sent his apostles before him into every community whither he himself would come, with instructions to remain in the house where they took up their temporary abode until they went thence, was not mainly that they might enjoy the comforts of a good home while in the community, and yet do nothing for the spiritual benefit of the inmates of the household, but that the work of evangelization might be begun and carried on in accordance with the purpose of our heavenly Father and afterwards embodied in the great commission, whereby the gospel is to be preached to every creature, and

those who believe and are to be baptized and are to be taught to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded, first of all in their own homes. This implies that there was a very earnest and persistent endeavor on the part of the apostles and their helpers, not only to secure the conversion of every inmate of the household where they tarried, but so to instruct the converts that the head of the family would be enabled to understand that he was henceforth to be the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, and the wife to understand that she is to be in subjection to the husband as the church is subject to Christ, so rendering a cheerful and willing obedience to him as the divinely appointed under shepherd of the little flock, and the wife and mother exercising her power over the children, if there be such, in such a manner as to secure their submission to Christ and to the father, in the same way that the Church exercises its power for the purpose of securing the conversion and subjection of impenitent people round about; thus making the Christian family, to all intents and purposes, a "church in the house," as truly so as the Church proper is a church in the community. In this way the Christian family became the nucleus around which converts from irreligious families might be gathered, and the instrumentality by means of which the gospel might be carried forth into other families, leavening them with the gospel leaven and passing from family to family until, in process of time, a whole neighborhood, or town, or city, was transformed into a community or town of "house churches."

The Greek language, like the French, has no word which corresponds exactly to our word home, and hence is obliged to use the word, *Oikos*, house; hence the phrase "church in the house" really means church of the home, or home church, in distinction from the church of the community or the church in the meeting-house. Col. 4 : 15 ; Rom. 16 : 5 ; Cor. 16 : 19 ; Philemon 2. Some have supposed that the phrase "church in the house" means either a branch church or a regularly constituted community church, which met for worship in some dwelling house, whereas, according to the New Testament, there was but one regularly constituted church in any town or city. And there ought to be but one now. "The house church" was nothing more nor less than a Christian family enlarged by such accessions as the family made from those irreligious families

which had not Christian parents. These "house churches" existed both before and after the Church proper was constituted, and in the same town or city. Moreover, we have no reasons for believing that they ever fulfilled the mission of the Church proper. They certainly did not, as a general rule, celebrate the Lord's Supper. The disciples in a given town, who belonged to the Church proper, all came together in one place for this purpose. 1 Cor. 11:20. We have no proof that the "house church" ever observed the Lord's Supper, or conducted any other services except those which were suited to the family. These churches were to the community church precisely what the town municipality is to the Commonwealth, with the single exception that the community church extended only through the city or town, rather than through a state or nation; the house churches being presided over by the husband or father, and groups of families being under the care of deacons who resided in different neighborhoods, the community being under the pastor. It is a remarkable fact that up to the time of Christ's ascension, and even until after the outpouring on the day of Pentecost, though there undoubtedly were more or less churches, proper or community churches, in existence in a partially organized condition, there was not so much as one such church existing in a fully organized condition, so far as we have any means of knowing. Even the church in Jerusalem was, as yet, so incomplete in its organization that the apostles were obliged to tell "the multitude of the disciples" to look out a board of overseers of esven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, to take the oversight of the distribution of alms for the support of widows. Had the community churches or the churches proper been fully organized and properly officered at the time that Christ arose from the grave and ascended on high, there would have been no occasion for the appointing of a standing committee of seven men who must wait until they were first proved, before they had a right to use the office of deacons while caring for the widows, who, up to that time, had been cared for by the apostles themselves. The land of Palestine must, therefore, have been completely dotted over with "house churches" or Christian families, at the time the seven were chosen to take the oversight of the widows, if the apostle Paul tells the truth, and he undoubtedly does, for he says that "his

ways " were in Christ Jesus, and his way always was to preach the gospel first in the homes of the people and in such a manner as to thoroughly Christianize the home institution and make it subservient to the purpose of God in propagating the gospel, and in making the converts steadfast in the faith and zealous in the work of evangelization. Hence, he not only told his brethren to learn to show piety first at home, but he conducted the means of grace in such a way that his converts could not help doing this. There was not so much as one thoroughly organized community church anywhere on the island of Crete, according to the inspired narrative, at the time that Paul left Titus there. If there had been, there would have been no occasion whatever for writing to Titus to appoint church officers in every city as Paul had appointed him, nor of setting in order the things left out in the church organization. Titus 1:5. There must have been "house churches" in abundance on the island at this very time, otherwise the Judaizers who came down there could not have been able to subvert whole households as they did. Titus 1:11. The same must have been true of that vast section of country where Christ and his apostles labored. There must have been churches proper also, but in an imperfectly developed and partially organized condition, otherwise there would have been no command given by Christ, when speaking of those brethren who had trespassed against any brother, to tell the matter to the church in case the offender would not listen either to the injured party or to the one or two witnesses who went with the injured party, to obtain a settlement of the difficulty. Matt. 18:15. The proof is therefore abundant and convincing that the divinely appointed method of conducting the work of evangelization was to carry the gospel directly to the homes and haunts of the people, make converts and keep on making them, baptizing them not into the fellowship of the Church proper, but into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost and into the fellowship of some Christian family whose members were the divinely appointed representatives of the family of our heavenly Father, the head of the family being clothed with full power to do the work of evangelization and to impart the religious instruction needed in the families around, though not as yet clothed with authority to do this work in the church proper even as a deacon, much less as a pastor. For

God's word for it, and the power of the Holy Spirit back of the word to enforce its application, those who were to be deacons must not only have their own children in good subjection to Christ, and be the husband of one wife, but they must first be proved. 1 Tim. 3:10. Consequently we are certain, not only that the "home church" was recognized by the apostles as the divinely appointed institution by which to do the preliminary work of evangelization and church building, but that it was so constituted at the very outset by the Creator, and so employed by both Christ and his apostles as to reveal to us the fact that it is God's will that Christians in all ages, not only shall not neglect this institution, but shall work it for all that it is worth. And if we examine the sacred narrative carefully, we shall find that both Christ and his apostles made it worth vastly more than we have any idea of in our day. The heads of families on the island of Crete must not only have understood what it was to be the head of the wife, and hence of the household, as Christ is the head of the Church, but they must have known how to follow the example and the teaching of Christ in their families and in the neighborhood round about, and they must have exercised their gifts pretty vigorously and for quite a long while at the time that Paul left Titus on the island, otherwise they would not have had faithful children in their households, much less children in good subjection, for the apostle does not here mean children who are in subjection to the old man, but to the new man. Subjection to the old man is not good subjection at all. Indeed the very attempt on the part of the husband and father to bring wife and children into subjection to the old man may be, and often is, the means of bringing them into eternal condemnation. This is not the work of the Spirit, but the work of the adversary of souls, and has ruined thousands for time and for eternity. And since a man must be first proved as well as have his own children in good subjection, in order to be a deacon in the scriptural sense of the term, and as it takes a considerable length of time for the head of the family to lay aside the authority of the old man and to put on the authority of the new man and to exercise this authority in a Christ-like manner, so that wife and children can discern the Christ in the government and daily demeanor of the head, it must have been quite a period of time before Titus could have found men in the different

cities and towns of Crete, who were ripe for the office of pastor, deacon and deaconess. Titus was not a man who would have dared to have appointed men who were not properly qualified for office either as deacons or pastors, as the pastors of many churches do nowadays. And the heads of those Christian families would not have dared to do as the heads of many families do nowadays. Nor would the wives have ventured to do as some wives do nowadays. Neither would the children have dared to do as many children do in our day. They were not brought up in the way that they now are, far from it. They had not the modern Sunday school to shirk parental responsibility on to, hence parents felt the responsibility and fulfilled the obligations which God imposed upon them. Hence, when Titus called upon the members of those Christian families to go into the presence of God, and by prayer and supplication, and ask God to show them by his Spirit whom he had set in the body as had pleased him to fill the office of deacon or deaconess, and requested all to write down the names of such and only such as they believed to possess the qualifications designated by the great apostle, they must have responded to his request with joy and with great accuracy and in perfect conformity to the teaching of Christ and his apostles, as contained in those portions of the sacred volume which have reference to the selection of church officers. 1 Tim 3 : 10. Had we been in the habit of following the example of Christ and of his apostles for the past hundred years, or the past twenty-five or fifty years, we should not be under the painful necessity of withdrawing Convention aid from field after field and town after town, when money has been appropriated for a score of years or more. Nor should we have pastor after pastor unsettled and the cause of Christ brought into ruin and disgrace by that very class of unreasonable men (2 Thess. 3 : 2) from whom Paul so earnestly prayed to be delivered, but whom we in our blindness thrust into the office of deacon by means of the nominating committee, an unscriptural device which does not properly belong to the Church of God, and ought never to have been in it. The apostolic churches were taught to watch and pray and wait for the proper growth and development of the proper spiritual gifts with which to fill the offices.

We appoint men to office before they give proof of their fitness. And as a very natural and inevitable result, the unity of the Spirit is destroyed, the law of life which is in Christ Jesus ceases to be the rule of faith and practice throughout the Church. Young converts stumble and fall out by the way, and instead of continuing steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and the breaking of bread and the prayers, we have the following of the course of this world on the part of some and the following of Christ on the part of the few, and the following of the enemy of all righteousness on the part of many. This all comes about very naturally. It is the necessary ripening up of the seed which is being sown by our present method of planting churches and doing evangelistic work. These methods are not reasonable, much less are they scriptural. On the contrary, they are both carnal and unscriptural, and in some cases even Satanic. What can be more injurious than the methods often used for the purpose of raising money for the support of worship, particularly in those communities where fairs, festivals, grab bags and lotteries are in use? What can be more Satanic than for the members of a church to get together in cliques, and plan and contrive in various ways to secure the appointment of some relative or friend on the nominating committee for the purpose of securing their own elevation, or the elevation of some personal friend or partisan to an office, for which God alone has the right to make the selection. If such practices are not Satanic no practices can be. Our churches will make mistakes and blunders enough and put unworthy men enough into the official positions of the Church, if we teach them to follow the example of Christ and his apostles as implicitly as possible. And our children will be given to feasting and revelling quite as much as they should be even if we do not convert our houses of worship into places of eating and drinking. And the number who will learn to throw dice and purchase lottery tickets and play cards will be quite sufficient for all practical purposes, to say the least, even if they do not have the sanctity of the place of worship and the solemnity of the ordinances of the Lord's house used to enforce and apply the lessons in feasting and gambling which are now given in so many churches, preparatory to their admission to those dens of

infamy and haunts of vice into which so many of the young are now being graduated from year to year.

WHY CONVERTS CONTINUED STEADFAST IN THE
APOSTLES' DAYS.

One of the principal reasons why the converts that were gathered on the day of Pentecost continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and the breaking of bread and the prayers, (Acts 2 : 42) was because they were not only soundly converted, but on being baptized they were placed under the spiritual watch care of their parents in case the parents were converted, and properly instructed with regard to their obligations to young converts. The children of irreligious families when converted were placed under the spiritual watch care of the parents of families which were Christianized, until such time as those parents should be converted. And these Christian parents were also placed under the spiritual oversight of deacons and deaconesses, if the Church proper had such who had proved themselves to be fit for the office, otherwise these Christian parents with their families were placed under the spiritual oversight of those who, like the seven selected to care for the widows in the church in Jerusalem, were of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, but had not served long enough to afford proof that they were blameless in their walk and conversation. It is altogether probable that the popish practice of having god-fathers and god-mothers selected to stand responsible for those infants who were sprinkled grew out of the practice of an earlier date of having the heads of Christian families taught to fulfil their obligations as teachers, not only to their own children but also to the children near by them, when converted in families whose parents were still impenitent. The reader will very readily see how this custom came to be established. It was a custom that needed no special command or by-law of the Church. All any Christian parent has to do is to read the great commission of Christ carefully, and then recall the fact that he is to be the head of a family as Christ is head of the Church, in order to ascertain that he cannot fulfil his obligations to his family as Christ fulfils his obligations to the Church without manifesting the tenderest solicitude for

the spiritual welfare of the irreligious round about him, and especially for those persons who are of the household of faith in irreligious families. Hence the head of the Christian family, if reminded of those high obligations which Christ has imposed upon him by the deacon or by the pastor, will cordially take the spiritual oversight not only of his own family but also of such converts as have been gathered from irreligious families near by, thus giving all proper spiritual oversight and a plenty of evangelistic work to do.

THE DEACONS NOT SIMPLY SERVITORS OF TABLES.

The attention of the reader is called especially to this arrangement in the official board of the apostolic church, in order that he may be enabled to see that the office of deacon was not simply an office to be filled by men who cared for the poor and looked after the finances. There would have been no special need of the apostolic injunction requiring the man who was to use the office of deacon to be both successful in bringing his own children into good subjection to Christ and to be proved to be blameless, and also to be spoken of as one who was expected to "purchase a good degree" while serving as deacon (1 Tim. 3: 13), and so be prepared for promotion to the office of pastor, as many deacons were, unless these men were to exercise their preaching talent, in case they had such talent, and their talent for exhortation, if they could not teach or preach. But in either case, subordinate pastoral care and spiritual oversight of converts and the gathering in of converts were all included in the official service of both deacons and parents in the days of the apostles. And it was this very admirable distribution of the gifts bestowed by the head of the Church and the sharing of the responsibility between the pastor and the deacons and the individual members of the Church, and including the heads of families more especially as nursing fathers and nursing mothers to those who had no spiritual fathers or spiritual mothers at home; it was this beautiful and truly God ordained plan and method of arrangement that ensured the steadfastness of the converts gathered and the rapid increase of converts from irreligious families round about. It was because the "home church" was the principal institution by means of which the

work of evangelization and upbuilding was carried on, that early historians have said in so many repeated instances that the primitive churches were fashioned as much after the family as after the synagogue. And it was because the means of grace were used so effectively and so persistently by the divinely appointed teachers and preachers, both in the temple and in every house daily, that the Lord added to the Church daily of such as should be saved. Acts 2:47. And the reason why the apostles and their co-workers were "in favor with all the people" for a considerable time after the mighty outpouring on the day of Pentecost was because, by this admirable distribution of the working forces of the Church, consisting of the purest and best and most thoroughly consecrated men and women who could possibly be selected by the most perfect of all methods of selection ever made known to man, viz.: prayer for divine guidance and balloting for candidates under the immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit in conformity to the example of Christ and his apostles, these gospel laborers went from house to house and haunt to haunt, preaching the gospel of the kingdom in such a way as to produce those very transformations in the homes of the people which everybody saw and felt needed to be made in order to make those homes precisely what they ought to be, the dwelling-places of the righteous and the abodes of peace and harmony.

PREACHING BY WOMEN.

That quite a large part of the preaching and teaching, that was done in the houses of the people and in those assemblies which were convened for the purpose of Christianizing the homes of the people and discussing those questions which pertain to the purity and peace and prosperity of the home institution, was done by women, who were solemnly set apart for this work, is very evident from facts and incidents recorded in different parts of the inspired narrative. And that these women did not preach nor teach in the church assembly or the assembly "where all were wont to come together in one place," is abundantly proved by statements contained in different portions of the inspired narrative. In the first place, the woman who was converted by Christ at the well was so moved by the

Holy Ghost to go back to her home that she actually left her water pot unfilled, though she had come to the well for the express purpose of drawing water, and went home without it, and not only proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation to the inmates of her dwelling, but she did this in such a way that many believed in Christ straightway. John 4:39. We are not explicitly informed in Luke 8:2, that those women who had been healed of their infirmities, among whom were Mary Magdalene and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, and many others, who ministered to Christ of their substance at the time he went through every city and village preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom, preached the gospel also, nor that the twelve apostles who were then with him preached the gospel. But it would be very unreasonable to suppose that the same Spirit who moved the heart of the woman who had been converted at the well to go with such haste to those who were dead in trespasses and sins, in her own dwelling, withdrew his power from Mary Magdalene and the other women, and left them and the apostles to stand idle right in the midst of the harvest which was so manifestly white and ready for the sickle, while their Lord and Master did all the reaping. Sinners in great numbers must have been under deep conviction among the multitudes who thronged the dwellings where the disciples tarried, as well as in the synagogues or market places where Christ held forth. Hence, the natural inference is that the same Spirit that moved Christ but a comparatively short time after to utter the words of the great commission, requiring the gospel to be preached to every creature, and who was now resting upon these multitudes, must have prompted both the apostles and the women who had been healed of their infirmities to declare the glad tidings, in every house which they entered, the same as they did after the day of Pentecost was fully come in Jerusalem. The fact that there were those in those dwellings who could not be reached by the men, but could be easily reached by the women, for men had not access to those apartments which were occupied by women in many cases, makes it all the more probable that these women did actually preach the gospel in the houses. Again, more or less of this group of women, and probably all of them, were in the upper chamber during the time that prayers were offered for the miraculous

outpouring on the day of Pentecost, and were baptized by the Holy Spirit, in order that they might preach or prophesy in fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel. And we are expressly informed that the gospel was not only preached in every house daily as well as in the temple in Jerusalem, but the preaching was done in such a way that the disciples were in favor with all the people (Acts 2:47), a statement which could not have been true except on the supposition that the preaching that was done in some of the houses in the apartments of the women was done by those women who had been baptized by the Holy Spirit. These were enabled to preach in such a manner, by the aid of the Spirit, as to secure and retain the good will of the people where they labored, in consequence of the very excellent results which followed their labors. The fact that the apostle Paul, whose "ways" were in Christ Jesus, generally took the most gifted and devoted women he could select, both married and the unmarried, with him in his missionary tours, and also their husbands, when they had such, and not only employed them in doing gospel labor with him, but commanded the brethren at Philippi to help those women who labored with him in this manner (Phil. 4:3), and gave many of them favorable mention in his epistles to the churches, shows very conclusively that these women did preach in this manner. And the additional fact, that when referring to the appointment of elders in his first epistle to Timothy (5:11), he not only carefully designates the qualifications of a certain class of widows whom he wishes to be enrolled among the female officers of the church, but commands Timothy to reject those widows who are less than sixty years old, because they would wax wanton and merry and become busybodies and tattlers, also shows that women preached from house to house.

WHY WOMEN WERE NOT ALLOWED TO PREACH THE GOSPEL
IN THE CHURCH PROPER OR THE ASSEMBLY WHERE
ALL CAME TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE.

That they were not allowed to preach in this assembly is evident for the following reasons, viz.: In Paul's first epistle to Timothy, which, according to chapter three, verse fifteen, was written to him partly in order that he might know how he ought

to demean himself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, in Chap. 2:12, he says, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over a man, but to be in silence or in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve, and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into the transgression." A command so positive and so explicit as this, given as it was by the Holy Spirit through the pen of the apostle Paul to Timothy, for the express purpose of showing him how to demean himself in the Church of God in relation to woman, ought to be sufficient even if there was no reason given for such a command. But the Holy Ghost has gone beyond the command, has given as a reason the fact that Adam was made first but was not beguiled by the tempter as Eve was. Another Scripture informs us that the first Adam was made in the image and likeness of the second Adam who was the Lord from heaven. 1 Cor. 15:47. Hence, he must have been endowed with the gift of dominion or authority, in his own personality without regard to his companion, for he was not only created first but he was created as a distinct personality, and was treated as a person by the Creator himself before Eve was formed. Eve, having been created after Adam was, and in order that she might be a helpmeet to him, could not have been so constituted as to have been endowed with the same kind of power which Adam possessed. If she had been, the question which should be head would have been brought into controversy at once, or very soon after Eve had been created. Hence, Eve must have been endowed with a different manifestation of power than that which Adam possessed, which power, though fully equal to that exercised by Adam, must have been so unlike that exercised by him as to have allowed him to exercise his kind of power without being under any sort of restraint or control from any being except God. Hence, Eve must have shared with him in his dominion only by virtue of her union with him, while Eve exercised her kind of power in and through her own personality, and Adam shared with her in this only through his union and fellowship with her. We have no more reason to suppose that Eve had a right to exercise dominion or authority over man in the beginning, or to share with Adam in the exercise of authority by virtue of her personal endowment,

than we have to suppose that the Holy Spirit has a right to exercise authority over the Son of God in the kingdom of heaven, by reason of his personal endowment. We are explicitly informed that it hath pleased the Almighty Father to commit all authority in his kingdom to the Son whom he made head over all things. Hence, according to the testimony of the Holy Spirit given through Paul, while Adam showed that he had qualifications which fitted him for his position as the head of the human family, by not being beguiled by the tempter, Eve showed her disqualification for being the head by being beguiled and falling into the transgression. And we have only to observe how immensely more potent was the power exerted by Eve upon her husband than the power even of the adversary of souls was, for it is plainly implied that Adam was subjected to the same kind of temptation that Eve was, and fell not until his wife tempted him, in order to see that Eve must have been so constituted in the beginning that she possessed in her own personal endowment a power not only different from the power wielded by Adam, but which, when wielded, either for good or for evil, was superior in its efficiency over man to the power of angelic beings, whether good or bad. And this brings us to the consideration of a matter that is often overlooked by both reformers and by preachers of the gospel.

THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF POWER EXERCISED BY THE
MEMBERS OF THE TWO SEXES.

The writer calls attention to it in this connection because it is a matter which the enemy of all righteousness is very anxious to have us overlook. He knows perfectly well that womanly power and manly power, whether natural or spiritual, are not one and the same manifestation of power. And he knows also that it is not possible, in the very nature of things, for either man or woman to be highly successful in influencing the members of the opposite sex for good by trying to be like the members of the opposite sex. Much less can they do this by trying to exercise the peculiar power which enters into the personal endowment of the members of the opposite sex, whether spiritual or natural. According to the testimony of the Holy Ghost, given through Paul, woman, though not inferior to man

in natural ability nor in social standing or constitutional endowment, when put to the test by the Creator himself, it has been conclusively shown that she lacks those qualities which fit her for the position of leader or commander over men, however superior to man as a subject under command. The power with which she is endowed differs as widely from the power of man as the power of the Holy Spirit differs from the power of the Son of God. The power with which the Son of God is endowed is divine power in authority. The power with which the Holy Spirit is endowed is divine power in subjection. And consequently woman is not qualified for the work of preaching the gospel in the Church proper, which is not only the pillar and ground of the truth, but has been established not simply for preaching the gospel but to give guidance and direction to those who have embraced the gospel. The Church is established, not for the defence of those truths which are of special importance to the family, and are best expounded and applied in the household or in household assemblies, but for the maintenance and defence of all truths in all assemblies and for most truths in public assemblies. Hence, the Church should have for its pastor not simply a pious and devoted man, but a man who is endowed with both natural and spiritual gifts which will enable him to enforce the observance of every command of Christ, not indeed by means of his own authority when viewed simply as a man, but by means of the commanding presence of the Almighty Father which accompanies his ministrations through the baptism of the Holy Spirit sent down upon him by the Lord Jesus Christ, whose ambassador he is and by whose authority alone he presides over the assembly, and in whose presence he preaches. The head of the Church is always present by his Spirit, and his recording angel makes a record of what is uttered by the preacher and takes cognizance of the deportment of all parties who are in the assembly, from the speaker in the sacred desk down to the sexton who conducts the worshippers to their seats. The angels who are sent forth to minister to those who are to become the heirs of salvation are also in attendance, and anxiously waiting to bear the glad news of the repentance of those who come in to the assembly to scoff and say that these people are mad, who, on being convinced that God is in the assembly in deed and in truth, bow down and

worship. It is very evident, therefore, that preaching the gospel in the church assembly is quite a different matter from preaching in the household or the social assembly. And it was for these reasons, in part, as well as for others well known to the Holy Spirit, that the apostle Paul was inspired to say that, though he spoke with tongues more than they all, he could not consistently do this in the church. And hence, the importance of those instructions which he gave concerning the dress and external deportment of both men and women while in the public assembly of the Church. These instructions were not given simply for the purpose of having both men and women appear in the house of God decently and orderly, or with neatness and propriety in their outward deportment, nor because one kind of apparel is more holy than another kind, but because it was necessary for the members of both sexes to appear before God in attire becoming to the members of the sex to which each person present properly belongs, in order that all parties being true to God, and to the constitution which God has given to each on receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit sent down upon the assembly in answer to prayer, might reflect the joyous light and love thus shed abroad in the heart through their countenances and by their entire deportment, so becoming an object lesson to impenitent worshippers, more impressive than the sermon of the preacher itself, in some instances. Thus enabling all who are in the assembly to take knowledge of the worshippers, that they have not only been with Jesus, but that Jesus is now present with them, so causing those who came in as scoffers to worship and bow down and go out with joy and peace. 1 Cor. 14 : 25. The great apostle to the Gentiles knew that it was only by the most positive and explicit obedience of the Son of God, an obedience which was carried to the utmost limit to which obedience could be carried, even to a base and ignominious death, the death of the cross, that Christ was able to come into possession of all power in heaven and in earth, whereby he is able to make all prevailing intercession with the Father. And hence, the wonder is that both men and women do not see that the only possible way by which any pastor of a church can have the requisite measure of power with God through the mediation of Christ, when engaged in prayer in the assembly where worship is conducted for all, or power over

his auditors sufficient to enable him to enforce a proper observance of the commands of Christ upon all, is by being himself not only obedient to every command given by the Head of the Church, but by enunciating those commands which he is endeavoring to enforce, with the commanding presence of God himself, or in other words, by means of precisely the same kind of authority which Christ himself wielded when preaching to the great assembly.

THE POWER REQUIRED IN DIFFERENT ASSEMBLIES
NOT THE SAME.

Some have asserted that a man needs precisely the same kind and measure of authority, when preaching to the lesser assemblies or private assemblies, that he needs in "the assembly where all come together in one place." But this is not so. It does not follow, by any means, that because every soldier in the national army is an officer of government and has authority to arrest any subject who is violating the laws, or authority to place any soldier who is disobeying orders under guard, that he has a perfect right to take command of a regiment or even to be the captain of a company. According to the New Testament, every Christian man is an officer in the kingdom of heaven, and is required to do duty as an officer and not simply as a subject, though he is also a subject, under command of higher officers. And every Christian woman is a subject in the kingdom of heaven and is required by the King himself to hold herself in subjection to the authority of the King, as invested in his officers, and is entitled to claim protection from the King to the fullest possible extent, by means of all the power which the King has at his disposal in the heavens above and in the earth beneath, just so long and only so long as she yields a cheerful and willing obedience to the divinely appointed officers of this kingdom. She has only to obey the King's orders implicitly, and then lift her cry for the redress of her wrongs and persist in pressing her suit, and she will find that she has all power in heaven and on earth at her disposal and the great Head of the Church at the back of that power. It is not more true that the infant son of Queen Victoria, when injured by any foreign power,

has simply to raise its cry of suffering in the presence of the queen mother, in order to have the combined forces of both army and navy throughout that vast empire moving for its defence or protection, with the queen and all of the high officers and the subjects of the whole empire actively engaged inflicting punishment on the wrong doer, than it is true that every Christian woman, who is thoroughly obedient to Christ, and holds herself in complete subjection to whatever officer the King may have placed over her and is ready to do the King's behest, may, by her prayer, move the arm that moves the worlds in her defence. But the very instant that she ceases to be obedient to the King's commands, and more especially those commands that were given by the Head of the Church for the express purpose of securing her protection, while in the discharge of her duties towards man, for whom she was created and to the promotion of whose welfare she should be devoted, she forfeits the King's protection as a willing and obedient subject, and can claim only that kind and that measure of protection which the King is accustomed to bestow upon those who are offending against his laws, and stand in perishing need of his chastisement. This does not imply that woman is inferior to man, nor that man is superior to woman, nor that man has a right to tyrannize over woman. Nor does it imply that woman is the slave of man. Queen Victoria, when viewed as an individual, is not in any sense superior to one of her subjects. Neither is Mr. Gladstone, the Prime Minister, superior to any other subject. Either of them might be hanged for high treason by the same courts of justice and by the same hangmen that any subject of Great Britain can be. Authority is not tyranny, nor is subjection servitude either in the spiritual or in the natural kingdom of God. Authority is the exercise of lawful power and not unlawful power. Subjection is submission to lawful power. And the only power which man has any right to wield in the kingdom of heaven, is that bestowed by Christ, the Head of the Church. And his duty is to exercise this in a Christ-like manner, so that the wife, or any other woman, if spiritually minded, may discern in his deportment and in the very words which he utters and in the tones of voice with which he speaks, the Christ who is in him, and so be able to render obedience as unto Christ. Hence,

though woman is entitled to all the protection which the King of heaven can afford, and will have this if she is truly obedient to Christ and devoted to the welfare of man, she has no right to usurp authority over man, nor to exercise authority upon man. Nor has man a right to tyrannize over woman, nor even to exercise the authority of the natural man over her rather than the authority of the spiritual man in the Church of God. To be the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church, his authority must be exercised by the spiritual man and in a Christ-like way and for the highest well-being of the wife. No Christian man has any sort of right to continue the government of the old man in his household, one hour after his conversion to God. And no church, nor pastor of a church, nor deacon, nor head of a neighboring Christian family, has any right whatever to suffer or allow the head of a neighboring family, when converted, to remain in ignorance with regard to that command of Christ which requires him to be the spiritual head of the family. It is a manifest violation of the teaching of the great apostle for any officer in Christ's kingdom to do this, as truly so as for an officer in the American army to allow a penitent rebel to remain ignorant of the fact that he must henceforth obey the laws of the United States, as a good citizen, ever after he takes the oath of allegiance. The same principle applies to all of the converts who are gathered into the kingdom of Christ throughout the world. Neither pastor nor deacon nor any head of a family ought to encourage any man to unite with the Church until he has been taught to become the spiritual head of his family, nor should they encourage any Christian woman to unite with the Church of God without teaching her first to show piety at home, by being in subjection to her husband, if she has one, in order that she may teach her children by example and precept to be in subjection also to the laws of Christ as expounded and applied by the husband and father of the family. And if a woman has no husband, she is still in duty bound to recognize the divinely appointed relationship and to hold herself in a condition of obedience to the law establishing that relationship, and in possession of that grace by which this law is cheerfully and willingly obeyed. This is one of the first and most important truths which the Holy Ghost, speaking through Paul, would have us know.

A TRUTH WHICH THE HOLY SPIRIT WOULD HAVE US KNOW.

What says the apostle in 1 Cor. 11:3? "I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." The reason why the Holy Ghost is so anxious to have the apostle reveal this important truth to us, is because it is just as important to the well-being of woman, both in this life and in the life to come, that she be in subjection to man, as that man be in subjection to Christ, or that Christ be in subjection to God. As Christ could not by any means fulfil his high mission as the head of the Church, without being in subjection to God with whom he has the most perfect intercessory power, only in consequence of his implicit obedience, so can man by no means fulfil his mission in the Church without the most implicit obedience to Christ, and for the same reason woman having been created for man and, hence, under the highest possible obligation to live and labor and sacrifice for his good, and especially for his spiritual well-being, and at no time and in no sphere under greater or more solemn obligation to be true to the purpose of God in her creation than when engaged in public worship, she can exert no good influence nor can she bring to bear any spiritual power whatever upon him, either from the Holy Ghost or through angelic ministration, except while she is in that condition of subjection which the Creator has placed her in, and is clothed with that grace whereby she is enabled not only to hold herself in subjection, but to render any assistance, perform any service which God may require of her, whereby she can give expression to her desire to promote his highest spiritual well being. This adjustment of relationship between man and woman was made by the same omnipotent God that determined the relationship which exists between man and Christ and between Christ and God. And if wrong has been done by the omnipotent Father, in the one case, still greater wrong must have been done by the same Being in each of the other cases. And it is high time that the members of our churches were made to see this and realize this and to feel the force of the obligation resting upon them. Too long has it been the custom of a certain class of ministers and would-be reformers to glide hastily over this very important portion of the revealed will of God, and add to their sophisms,

slurs about the erroneous theories of the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul tells us very plainly that the commands which he gives and the gospel which he preaches are from Christ. And he tells those who are spiritual to acknowledge that they are Christ's commands and not his. 1 Cor. 14 : 37, 38. And it is only the unspiritual who do not acknowledge that his commands are the commands of Christ. The apostle Paul was not led to record these remarkable revelations of the Holy Spirit with the view of causing the humiliation or degradation of woman, but with the view of securing her exaltation and glorification by both God and man. He was enabled to see very clearly that her present and future exaltation, both in the eyes of God and man, depended entirely upon her willingness to lay herself down upon God's altar a willing sacrifice, in imitation of the example set before us by the Lord Jesus Christ. And the extraordinary success achieved by such women as Florence Nightingale, when devoting herself to the nursing of the sick and suffering soldiers of the British army in the Crimean hospitals, and the high esteem in which she was ever afterwards held, not simply by all the army and navy officers, but by the soldiers and marines of the entire realm, ought to convince every one that the instructions given by the apostle Paul are based upon those principles which constitute the very foundation of woman's happiness here and her glory hereafter. A woman cannot even make fair beginning of that glorious work to which she is called of God, until she becomes the happy recipient of that divine power which comes only from God and in answer to that prayer which is prompted by a spirit of entire consecration to the service of God and the well being of man. Every person who has any considerable amount of spiritual discernment knows that the very moment that any woman begins to usurp authority over a man, that moment her power over him for good ceases, at least so far as she personally is concerned. He neither loves her nor respects her nor cares for her a moment longer than she begins to exercise authority over him. If he is a true man he won't strike her nor abuse her, but he will let her very severely alone. If he is married to her he may stop in doors long enough to get his meals, perhaps, and it may be he will stay long enough to get his sleep, but more than as likely as not he will eat his meal in sullen silence and light his cigar and go off to the saloon. And

if he is an immoral man, it won't take many exhibitions of a desire or purpose on the part of any woman to stand up for her rights like a man in his presence, rather than like a woman, to cause him to go from his home to the brothel, where he can find more congenial, if not more virtuous companionship. And the wonder is, that those would-be reformers who tell women and even children to stand up for their rights just as men do, do not see this and realize this. The truth is, this very class of would-be reformers are doing more probably by way of preparing our children and youth for the saloon and the brothel than the keepers of these dens are. And in some instances they are creating stronger currents of influence in our homes and in our churches, by which our young people are borne away from our homes and from our churches to saloons and brothels, than the most abandoned men and women are, in spite of all they have to say against the saloon and the brothel and in favor of the home institution, when on the public platform. It does not matter how zealous they are in their efforts. They will fail utterly in the accomplishment of their object in spite of their zeal, unless they understand the true secret of woman's power over man, and learn to use it with Christ-like devotion and with that tender yearning of heart which the Holy Spirit alone can develop in their hearts. These misguided women will send men to the saloon and brothel, too, in spite of all the laws we place on the statute book to prevent them from going there. We may close every bar-room and saloon in the land and make laws requiring a man to stay at home evenings and to abandon his smoking and drinking, and we may establish an army sufficient to keep his house constantly under guard, and enroll women in that army and command them to patrol the streets under arms and march them to the polls with muskets on their shoulders, and still we shall find that depraved men will find ways and means by which to torture the very life out of women in spite of all legal enactments and all military equipments. Depraved and brutal men will multiply their means and methods of torture, precisely in proportion as we increase the rigor of these laws which are intended to place them in subjection to women. Man is so constituted that he will not be in subjection to woman. He never has been in any past age and he never will be in ages to come. Neither will he ever share with woman in the exer-

cise of authority for any considerable length of time. For, being of stronger muscular frame, when words come to blows, and they always will sooner or later, when the question who shall be in authority and who in subjection is at issue, man will sooner or later be in authority and woman in subjection. And all this talk about woman having the same right to exercise authority over man that man has over woman is the sheerest nonsense. This very talk is necessarily doing an immense amount of damage in the homes of the people and everywhere else. This talk is sure to produce insubordination among children, divorce between married men and married women, unequal marriages among those who are about to enter into the marriage relation, for the last man on earth whom a true woman will marry is a womanized man, and the last woman whom a true man will marry will be a manized woman. And hence, where these sentiments prevail, true men and true women will often refuse to marry at all for want of suitable partners, while men and women both, who are blest with strong parental instincts, will either marry those who are not their equals and be unhappy, and will raise up children who inherit the most objectionable qualities of the inferior party, while others, yielding to parental instinct or violent passion, will fall into the snare of the seducer and will be thrust down to the lowest haunts of vice. So that, in reality, it often happens that the most powerful and pernicious influences which are being brought to bear upon the young of both sexes are wielded by those would-be reformers, who make the pulpit and the public platform the arena in which they display their masculine characteristics in the presence of our daughters, and who, by their perversion of those scriptures which teach men and women to recognize the relationship which God has established between them, not only conceal from our young women all knowledge of woman's true power, but prevent them from being able to obtain this power or to exercise it, either in our sanctuaries of worship or elsewhere. God only knows how many of our young women are now being not only unfitted for their mission in life, as the helpmeets and even the saviours of men, but are being prepared by the enemy of all righteousness to become the destroyers of men, both for time and for eternity, by the pernicious teaching of these would-be reformers.

POWER IN SUBJECTION AND POWER IN AUTHORITY.

There is such a reality in the kingdom of God as divine power in subjection, as well as divine power in authority. And there is such a reality as human power in subjection among men on earth, as well as human power in authority. And one might just as well say that the omnipotent Jehovah is unjust to himself and to each of the other two persons in the Trinity, because he sees fit to manifest his subjective power, or power in subjection in and through the person of the Holy Spirit, and his power in authority, or commanding power, in and through the person of his Son, as to say that God is unjust because he sees fit to manifest his divine power in subjection in human form, in and through woman, and his divine power in authority in human form, in and through man. Divine power in authority as manifested in and through the personality of the Son of God is not in any proper sense more potent than divine power in subjection, or subjective divine power as manifested in and through the Holy Ghost. There can be no adequate revelation of the power of Jehovah without the presentation of both of these two kinds of power in personal God form. And there can be no adequate presentation of human power without the presentation of both human power in authority and human power in subjection to human authority, each in personal human form. We have only to look at the two manifestations or practical exhibitions of these two kinds of power, as we see them displayed in every well regulated Christian family daily, in the person of the father and the mother, in order to see clearly that while the two kinds of power are equal, and both of them not only beneficial but indispensable to the highest well-being of the family, that they are very unlike each other. The power of the father is essentially a commanding or directing power intended to secure obedience through authority, or commanding force. The power of the mother, if she is a true mother, is essentially a subjecting power manifesting itself, not simply through her own obedient example, but through her persuasion and sometimes by means of her entreaty and her tears. The power of the father is head power emanating from the head. The power of the mother is essentially heart power and comes from the heart and appeals directly to the heart. And nothing

is more needed in our day, in the family and in the world at large, than a right understanding of these two equal and all important manifestations of power. And the wonder is, that preachers of the gospel and reformers do not see this and realize that, in order to have power with God by intercession when engaged in prayer, we must be in subjection to God, especially in all those requirements which he has given for the purpose of determining what shall be our deportment towards those whom we pray for. A woman may pray for her husband or for any other man in form, but she cannot pray really and potentially so long as she is in rebellion against that command of God which requires her to be in subjection to man. If she offends in one point she is guilty of all. She is not required to feel that she is inferior to man or must be a slave to man. If she feels in this way she is not in subjection but in rebellion against both God and man. Cheerful and willing devotion to man's well-being is what God requires of woman. Christ could have had no power with God while engaged in prayer when on earth if he had risen in rebellion against any command of God. Man can have no power with Christ nor with God through Christ, so long as he is acting in rebellion against Christ or against any command pertaining to the Church of Christ, unless he is ignorant of the obligation imposed by that command. And even if he is ignorant, he cannot have the same power with God, nor can he exert the same measure of influence over his fellows, as he could if he knew what that command was and was obedient. It is not possible for the pastor of any church to exert as much influence for good over the church over which he presides, even though ignorant of the fact that it is his duty to insist that a woman shall not preach in the assembly where public worship is conducted by the church proper, if he fails to enforce the command which requires woman to refrain from preaching in this assembly, as he could wield if this command was in force, for there will always be more or less in the assembly who know that the command of Christ is being broken by him. And he will be sure to lose a measure of his power for good over them. And the wonder is that any pastor of a church who knows that the Head of the Church has forbidden women to preach in this assembly dares to introduce any woman into this assembly for the purpose of having her preach the

gospel there, no matter how willing and desirous he may be to have her preach in other assemblies. And it is a still greater wonder how any intelligent woman who has given prayerful attention to this subject dares to take her stand before this assembly with the view of preaching the gospel before it. Such a woman must know that the Head of the Church is always present with the recording angel, taking cognizance of her deportment with the view of requiring her to give account of herself in the day of final reckoning, and has provided her with an indefinite number of other assemblies besides this, all of which are better suited to the proper exercise of her gifts and in any one of which she is at full liberty to preach to her heart's content. The Head of the Church has commanded her not only to obey, but to teach others to obey every command of Christ in every place where she may be called upon to labor, among which commands is the command which requires women to be silent in the assembly of the Church proper, when met for public worship. There were assemblies enough in the days of the apostles where women had full liberty to preach, assemblies in the household, assemblies by the riverside, assemblies in doors and out, of all sizes and grades from a single individual up to almost any number which their voice could reach. And there are assemblies of this kind now, if a woman wishes to preach before them. The writer is not aware that any sacred writer has ever forbidden or made record of the fact that the Holy Spirit has forbidden women to preach in any other assembly except the Church proper, when met for public worship. And yet there are some women who seem to be determined on preaching before this assembly with uncovered head precisely the same as men do, and insist upon it that they have a perfect right to do so and unhesitatingly declare that a woman is dishonored and her rights are encroached upon the instant that she is required to be silent in this assembly. Many have openly affirmed that they have just as good a right to preach in this assembly as any man has. They seem to forget that no man has a right to preach there as a man, and that God has a perfect right to say who shall and who shall not preach there, and that it is simply an act of rebellion against God for either man or woman to preach there unless authorized by God to do so, and that it is also an act of rebellion against God for

the pastor of any Church to suffer or allow either man or woman to preach there unless he is authorized by God to do so. God has not only not authorized any woman to preach there, but he has positively and explicitly forbidden any woman to preach there and has commanded them to keep silence there, and has repeatedly enjoined it upon his preachers not to suffer nor allow women to preach there nor to usurp authority over man. And if God has any rights which all are in duty bound to respect, the right to say who shall and who shall not preach before the Church proper when assembled for public worship is certainly one of them. And it becomes both man and woman to pause a little before venturing to disobey the command requiring silence on the part of woman, and enforcing silence on the part of the preacher in this assembly. Our Heavenly Father has been very kind and considerate about this matter, and has made ample provision for all whom He has endowed with gifts of any sort suitable to the work of edifying any and all who need to be edified, by the exercise of any gift which they may have, gifts of prophecy, gifts of tongues, gifts of miracles, gifts of healing, gifts of any kind, but not all in the Church. Even the apostle durst not go into the Church and exercise the gifts of tongues there, though he spake with tongues more than they all. And if he durst not exercise this gift there because it is forbidden, it would be well for women to consider whether it will answer for them to exercise their gifts there when forbidden to do so by the Holy Spirit.

ASSEMBLIES OF VARIOUS KINDS NEEDED.

There doubtless should be assemblies of various kinds in which both men and women may be edified by preaching those portions of the gospel which cannot fitly be proclaimed in the great assembly and assemblies, for those who, when called upon to exercise their gifts, can do so more successfully and more easily than they can in the assembly where all are wont to come together in one place. Assemblies for different purposes may very appropriately be called together in the same meeting-house where the Church is wont to meet for public worship, provided that they are called at a different hour than the service which has been assigned for the benefit of all who are wont to attend

the Church service. These assemblies may also be very appropriately called together in different parts of the town, if pains are taken to make the appointment at such hours as will afford opportunity for all to come together in one place, or in those places which are opened for worship by all, and for the edification of all. The Holy Ghost solved the problem how to reach the masses, not simply by having places of worship open for the masses at some central point, but by having assemblies of different kinds in various parts of a city or town, in dwelling houses and in halls and synagogues, in market-places and by the wayside and by the riverside, where were those who were endowed by the Holy Spirit with gifts which enabled them to edify different classes of persons according to their actual needs. If a person wished to listen to those who spoke in unknown tongues and hear the interpretation of the message conveyed to the assembly by those who interpreted tongues, he could easily do so by going to the assemblies where these services were held. And so of other assemblies and other gifts. Hence, in the days of the apostles, services of various kinds, with diverse kinds of gifts, were held here and there in different parts of a town, just as occasion might require, during one part of the Lord's day, and all who would came together in some one of the places where the service was intended for the edification of all, during another part of the day. In times of refreshing, these services were kept up daily both in dwelling-houses and in other places which were thrown open to those whose distinctive work was to preach the gospel of the home institution in the homes of the people, and to show them how to build up Christian homes. That there was a class of religious teachers who made it their distinctive work to preach the gospel of the home institution in household assemblies, there is no reasonable ground for doubt. For the instructions given to them by the apostle are such as bear directly upon this kind of work, never upon the specific work of church building, and in no instance is any one of this class of gospel laborers referred to in any part of the New Testament, in such a way as to imply that they ever served as pastors of Churches, or that they ever took an active part in the Church service. And the advantages which are gained by this divinely appointed order and method of conducting the services of religion are many.

Nothing would be more imprudent than for the pastor of a feeble Church, whose members live in a community where the vices which are characteristic of the more degraded of either sex abound, to go into the pulpit and discourse upon these vices in the presence of both sexes, with that kind of familiarity which is necessary in order to secure a radical cure of such vices in the community. He might very appropriately discourse to the members of one sex in an assembly called for this purpose. A deaconess might discourse to the members of the other sex in a similar way in an assembly called for the purpose. But it is neither fit nor proper for the pastor of a Church to discourse before a promiscuous assembly, in such a manner as to give offence to the auditors; it is certainly not proper for the members of either sex to demean themselves in the Church in such a manner as to make it impossible for the Spirit of God to use their deportment, while in the assembly, as a means by which to assist the preacher in unfolding and enforcing all of the claims of the gospel upon all who are in the assembly. Many of the spectators need nothing while in the assembly so much as they need the consistent and heavenly demeanor of true worshippers, to enable the preacher, when baptized by the Holy Spirit, to lead them to faith and repentance. It is possible for very well meaning professors of religion so to attire themselves before coming to the house of God and so to demean themselves while there, as not only to drive all serious thoughts away from the minds of spectators, but even to turn their thoughts away from God and away from the sanctuary down to the haunts of vice, while public worship is being conducted, and thus become unwillingly and perhaps unconsciously the agents in the hands of the adversary, in frustrating the grace of God at the very time that God is endeavoring to save sinners. The writer was never more deeply impressed with a sense of the vast importance of this matter of appropriate dress and proper deportment on the part of both men and women, while in the house of God, than while attending public worship on the Lord's day a short time since, in the very sanctuary where he used to attend occasionally in early life, when deep solemnity seemed to prevail all through the audience and where conversions were frequent. The invocation was scarcely pronounced when men and women began to get up and go out in

different parts of the building. The pastor had often been annoyed in this way before, but did not know the cause of the annoyance until pains were taken to have the offenders followed by detectives, and learned that they had formed the habit of coming there to select their partners preparatory to going to dens of infamy. The time was when such solemnity pervaded the assembly in that very sanctuary that such offenders would not have dared to have been guilty of such an offence. But when the members of Churches allow the tone of piety to be lowered by conforming to the world, instead of raising it by closer and more accurate conformity to the requirement of God's Word, impenitent persons will lower the standard of decency and good order proportionately. And unquestionably one very important reason why women were forbidden to preach in the Church assembly in the days of the apostles, or to address God in prayer with uncovered heads, and were encouraged to preach in households and in other assemblies, was because by conforming to these usages they could wield a much more potent influence for good than they could in any other way. By not conforming to the established usages of the Church they would deprive the Holy Spirit of the opportunity to use their example and influence in such a way as to deepen the impression made by the sermon, or to arrest the attention of careless spectators while they beheld the heavenly adorning which these devout worshippers wore upon their countenances when their hearts were filled with the Spirit of God, and their souls were going out after God in prayer in behalf of lost and ruined souls. And hence the apostle was moved by the Holy Spirit to write, "If a woman is not veiled, let her also be shorn." But if it is a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven let her be veiled or covered. It was the practice of that age to shear off the long hair of those who had become impure, while the pure and the virtuous wore long hair with a veil extending, not over the face, but over the top of the head and shoulders down to the waist, for the purpose of making the language of nature, which was contained in the long hair, still more emphatic; for Paul says that the long hair was given to woman for a covering or veil, and hence, a true sign of her modest and virtuous character. The long hair was also suggestive of the idea that she belonged to that class of persons who were created in the image and like-

ness of the veiled person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, rather than in the image and likeness of the unveiled person, the Son of God. Hence, if a woman did not wear the appropriate head-dress of her sex, when engaged in public worship, the practical effect produced on the minds of spectators by her appearance would be the same as the effect produced by an impure woman. And being created for man, she ought to demean herself when in the Church of God in such a way that she will not only exert some good influence over those for whose benefit the services are being conducted, and whose salvation the Spirit of God is endeavoring to secure, but she ought to heed the instruction given by the apostle Peter, which requires her to be in subjection to man and to put on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is produced by the power of the Holy Spirit acting upon her renewed nature, which heavenly adorning is even above price in the sight of God, in consequence of its efficiency as a means of grace, for this heavenly adorning, like the word preached, is the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation, to those who embrace the truth that is thus brought in contact with their hearts. 1 Pet. 3:1-5. The Holy Ghost would even have woman go beyond the instructions given by the apostle Peter when engaged in public worship. Those instructions are especially applicable to the home circle, and were given for the benefit of those whose husbands do not hear the word preached. Even such husbands may be won to Christ by beholding the chaste deportment and heavenly adorning of the wife. But in the public service of the Church, though women do not have opportunity to exert any influence over men by preaching the gospel, though they have abundant opportunity for preaching the gospel in other assemblies, yet in the Church, it is quite possible for them when dressed in proper apparel and engaged in silent prayer in imitation of the example of Hannah and other devout women whose names have come down to us in the inspired narrative, to have such power, both with God and with men, as to prevail and secure such mighty results as could be achieved in no other way. Many of the most glorious and truly wonderful achievements recorded in the Old Testament were wrought through angelic ministration in answer to prayer. And according to the apostle, the angels are all sent forth as ministering spirits to minister to those who shall be heirs of

salvation. And unquestionably the inspired writer refers to this kind of ministration and to the power which may be wielded by women through this agency, when engaged in prayer in the Church. 1 Cor. 11: 10.

A STRANGE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE.

The writer is aware that this passage of scripture has often been interpreted in such a way as to imply that women ought not to address their Creator in prayer while in the public assembly, without having the sign or badge of man's authority on their heads in the form of a veil. But this certainly is a very strange interpretation, and is wholly out of harmony with the apostle's method of reasoning. He nowhere implies that the long hair is a badge of man's authority or that the veil is such a badge. He was moved by the Holy Spirit to inform his readers with regard to the very important truth that the head of woman is man and the head of man is Christ and the head of Christ is God, and plainly implies that the power of woman over man, when engaged in public worship, depends upon precisely the same principle that the power of man with Christ depends, or the power of Christ with God depends, viz., implicit subjection to God's requirements and earnest importunity and superabounding faith in God and firm reliance on the Holy Spirit, and not upon any other instrumentality. If woman ought to have the sign or badge of man's authority on her head when she goes into the presence of God to pray in public, then man ought to have a badge of Christ's authority on his head and Christ ought to have the badge of God's authority on his head. But the apostle says that man ought not to have a veil on his head when he prays in public. If the apostle wished to say, the sign or badge of authority, rather than power, he could have done so in the Greek language just as easily as we can in English. He has used precisely the same word that is used in John 1: 12. "To as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God." The word here means spiritual power, power in lively exercise, constituting those who embrace Christ, sons. And inasmuch as it is fundamental law in the language of inspiration, that all words must have the same meaning in the same and in like connections where refer-

ence is had to the same and to like objects of thought, we have only to recall some scene in the sacred narrative in which the word power is used, where reference is had to a suppliant engaged in fervent prayer for divine interposition and angelic ministration, in order to ascertain precisely what the apostle means in the text under consideration. The case of Jacob, when wrestling in prayer for deliverance from the hand of his brother Esau, is very much in point. Gen. 32 : 28.

The apostle has disposed of the veiling of the suppliant's own head a few verses above, and says that if a woman addresses God in prayer unveiled, she dishonors her own head, that is the head of her body. He implies that she dishonors her official head, man, also. And having said in a few verses above that the head of the woman is man, and in the verse preceding the 10th, that woman was made for man, she ought to have power upon him or over him through angelic ministration, that is by means of those angels who are sent forth to minister to his salvation, when engaged in prayer in public. And if she is true to her own constitution and true to the purpose of God in the plan of redemption, which is to make her the honored instrument of leading man up out of the thralldom of sin into which she led him, in the apostacy, woman will have power upon man through the angels, which will be greater even than her power over him in the apostacy through the tempter. But in order that she may exercise this power in the Church of God, it is not only necessary for her to be a virtuous woman and a Christian woman, she must also come into that intimate relationship to Christ, who has all power in heaven and earth and has also given the commands which are to govern her deportment towards man while in the Church, which will enable her to be baptized with the Spirit, and to be so filled with the Spirit as to cause the inward adorning of her renewed nature to appear on her countenance in such a manner as to give a heavenly expression to her countenance, rather than simply the expression which woman naturally wears while in an unconverted state. She ought, therefore, to be very careful not to appear in the house of God with that masculine expression of countenance which some women wear, which is so offensive to man. It makes an immense difference with the services of the Lord's house, whether from one-half to three-fourths of the

worshippers appear before God dressed in the attire of profligates, or the attire of those who worship the Goddess of fashion, or the attire of those who make a god of their stomachs, or in the attire of those who worship the Supreme Being in spirit and in truth. The inward adorning will correspond very nearly to the outward appearance as a general rule, and the effect produced on spectators will vary accordingly.

THEIR BAPTISM BY THE SPIRIT DEPENDS ON THEIR
CONFORMITY TO THE WORD OF GOD.

The time has been when the public worship of the Lord's house was accompanied by a power that was absolutely overwhelming and perfectly irresistible. President Edwards, when preaching that memorable sermon, "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," though reading from a manuscript held in his hand, found his auditors so overcome with sobbing and weeping all over the house that he was obliged to pause and ask them to restrain their feelings so that he could go on. A single discourse, preached in the Baldwin Place Church in Boston by the Rev. Dr. Stow, was known to have been followed by the awakening of more than one hundred persons who experienced religion and were added to that church. And the reason, and the only reason, why public worship is not more fruitful in conviction and conversion of sinners, at the present time, is because neither preachers nor church members are conforming to the conditions on which this power is conferred, in the way and manner that they ought. Many of the worshippers do not show proper reverence either for God or for his sanctuary. Some do not enter so fully into the purpose and object which God has in view, which is to glorify himself by means of the salvation of the lost, as they ought. When the Holy Spirit sees that worshippers come to Church mainly for the purpose of being entertained by an able sermon and by artistic singing, he discovers at once that his services are not really desired nor sufficiently valued to be earnestly sought for and firmly relied upon, and, hence, he withdraws from the assembly. It ought not to be considered at all surprising if the Holy Spirit allows the chariot of salvation to move on without him, if preacher and hearers take an attitude which seems to imply that they look

upon Him as the fifth wheel of the chariot. But when preachers of the gospel show by their very tones of voice, as well as by the substance of their sermons, that they have an intense solicitude for the salvation of the impenitent, and the worshippers appear before God with such evidences of the joy of God's salvation in their hearts that spectators can not fail to take knowledge of this fact, the Holy Spirit becomes not only the chief personage of the assembly, but the all-pervading power of the assembly, and conversions become both numerous and genuine.

THE RELATION OF GOD'S WORSHIP TO MANHOOD
AND WOMANHOOD.

God knows that a pure manhood and a pure womanhood can not be maintained and preserved either in the Church or in the community, except through the power of the Holy Ghost. And he also knows that it is utterly impossible for either man or woman to obtain and retain this power, and still be careless and indifferent about their deportment while in the Church of God. He also knows that one of the most unwomanly acts that women sometimes perform, is to stand up before the Church of God when met for public worship, with uncovered head like a man, and there address God in prayer or try to preach the gospel of Christ before this assembly in violation of the commands of Christ. The more excellent way is for her to keep silence in this assembly and exercise her gifts in those assemblies where her services are more highly appreciated than the gifts of men are, or possibly can be, and where her influence for good will be felt as it can not be felt in the public worship of the Church proper. It is sometimes said by persons who are in the habit of putting their own opinions above God's word, that they would sooner hear some women preach in the public assembly than to hear some men, because they will preach an abler sermon. But the question under consideration is not a question of ability or talent, nor of scholarship, nor of education, nor even of piety. But it is a question of authority and of divine appointment solely. The ablest and most scholarly ministers are not always the ones who wield the largest measure of divine power in the pulpit. We need just as much talent and culture

and piety in the household assemblies and social assemblies of the Church as we do in the Church proper. And God intends that we shall have these. But he does not intend to have women spoil or injure their gifts, nor destroy their influence over men, nor deprive themselves of the power which he is willing to bestow upon them, by trying to exercise a kind of power which he is not willing to bestow upon them and does not want them to exercise. There are more or less well meaning women who think, no doubt, that they can preserve the qualities of true womanhood, and be the means of encouraging others to maintain a sanctified fatherhood and a sanctified motherhood in the Church and in the community, and still preach before the Church with uncovered head just like men, in open violation of the commands of Christ. But these persons overlook the fact that they are entirely dependent upon the Holy Spirit for the power by which they are to be successful in their ministry. They also overlook the fact that the most potent influences for good in the Church of Christ are not exerted by those women who put on masculine airs, and thus awaken opposition, or create dislike among their auditors, but by those who, with feminine grace and heavenly adorning, not only avoid awakening opposition, but win admiration and secure cöoperation in whatever work they may be engaged. And in order that our daughters may be able to attain to that high order of usefulness which it is possible for them to attain, and become thoroughly proficient in the work which God has assigned to them in the home and in Church and in the world, it is not only necessary for them to preserve their modesty and avoid the acquisition of those masculine characteristics, which are so offensive and so repugnant to the purest and best members of both sexes, but they must secure that heavenly adorning of the renewed nature which comes only from the Holy Spirit, and which appears only on the countenances of those women who exercise their Christian graces in a womanly way. And hence, there is probably no act performed by woman in the Church in the presence of our daughters, with which the Holy Spirit is more thoroughly grieved, than the act of standing up in the pulpit and addressing God in prayer with uncovered head like a man. Conduct of this kind cannot fail to produce an injurious effect upon the minds of those young women whom the Holy

Spirit is endeavoring to qualify for the very highest positions of usefulness in the Church, which it is the privilege of Christian women to fill. Conduct of this kind is not only wrong, but it is a direct violation of those commands of Christ which were given for the express purpose of securing the orderly deportment of women in the Church of God. There are probably scores and hundreds of young women even now in the churches, who have already lost the charm of modesty by copying the example of those who delight in nothing more than to display their masculine characteristics in public assemblies. It is only a very slight step from immodesty to wantonness. A very few efforts to appear manlike, rather than ladylike, will make it impossible for any Christian woman to appear in the house of God adorned with that heavenly adorning, which is produced by the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the cheerful exercise of one's womanly graces in a womanly manner. It is not sufficient that our young women be taught to demean themselves in such a manner as to avoid wearing an expression of countenance which the virtuous despise, and which the libertine loves to look upon. They can, and ought to be, encouraged by every true woman so to demean themselves that their expression of countenance shall be heavenly and divine. But in order that they may do this, they must exercise their gifts and graces in the way and manner which is pointed out in the word of God. They should be taught to delight in demeaning themselves in this manner, if they really wish to enjoy the largest possible measure of the presence of the Holy Spirit, and to be just as useful as possible to their companions and associates. There are hundreds and thousands of impenitent men, who will listen with breathless attention to women while preaching the gospel in parlors and in household assemblies, and in conference meetings, who look with sadness, if not with disgust, upon them when endeavoring to preach in the pulpit of the Church. These men know that feminine modesty is a very important gift bestowed by the Creator upon their daughters for their protection and for their introduction into the society of the purest and the best members of both sexes. And they also know that one of the surest ways by means of which these daughters can be unfitted for the society of the purest and the best, is by accustoming them to the habit of putting on masculine airs, and demeaning themselves

as nearly like men as possible, in the Church of God. It is not prejudice, therefore, but a true regard for the highest well-being of their daughters, that influence these men.

GOD'S IDEA OF A CHURCH.

One of the most unfortunate circumstances connected with the labors of those pastors who are engaged in the work of building up feeble churches consists in the fact that there are so many professing Christians in and about these churches, who have received so much training from these loose and disorderly preachers and platform lecturers, who seem to have no proper idea of what a true Church of God really is, and who look upon this institution, not as an organization which has been introduced into this world from heaven and placed under laws which were formed expressly for the purpose of preventing it from becoming worldly, and keeping the institution continually fixed upon the only sure and solid foundation upon which it possibly can rest, and still be safe and secure. Christ came into the world with the intention of so constituting the Church and so conducting its affairs that its members shall be so permeated by the spirit of heaven, and so governed by the laws of heaven, that the Church will be the means of giving men a foretaste of heaven and thus prepare them for heaven. But there are many Christians in some communities who look upon a Church of Christ as simply an assembly of well meaning men and women, who should be allowed to be and do just about as they have a mind to, and who also should be permitted to worship God just as they please, no matter what may be their attire or their deportment, so long as they are not conscious of having any very bad intentions, and are not aware that they are guilty of transgressing any very important command of Christ, when interpreted in the way and manner that they are in the habit of interpreting it, or may desire to have it interpreted, to suit their taste or convenience. This class of persons fairly lose sight of the object for which the Church is constituted. They also lose sight of the object which the Holy Spirit is aiming to secure, by the instructions given to us by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians. His object is not simply to teach the Corinthian women how to be virtuous, but to be heavenly-minded.

He is endeavoring to show them how to demean themselves in such a manner that the Holy Spirit can make use of both their prayers and of their heavenly-mindedness in effecting the conversion of men. God does not wish to have us build up churches which have no higher aim than simply to make people virtuous. He wants churches built up that will save men; churches whose members will delight in nothing more than in becoming the honored agents through whom a living, present salvation will be brought into direct contact with the hearts of men who are dead in trespasses and sins. And if God can not have this kind of churches built up, he does not want any. Better that men remain dead in trespasses and sins without any church, than to have them come in contact with churches whose members are also dead, and who are not conscious of this fact, but suffer their deportment, even while in the sanctuary, to breed moral pestilence in the community and in their homes. Pastors of feeble churches will make very slow progress in the work of building up churches in very many communities, so long as the prevailing ideas concerning the Church and the home institution remain in the minds and hearts of the people round about. Pastors must in some way get better and more scriptural ideas concerning both of these institutions into the minds and hearts of the people, or there will be still greater decline. God's idea of a church is that of a body of devout and prayerful men and women who have been so changed by divine grace that they have not only passed from a state of spiritual death to a state of spiritual life, but who are living this life with a purpose and aim to be and do what God wants them to be and do. It is not of any sort of use to build up churches which will teach men and women to make gods of themselves and to substitute their own opinions for divine revelation.

Hence, when engaged in public worship, church members should acquire the habit of worshipping God in the way and in the manner that he wants to have them worship him, and not in whatever way and manner may suit their convenience. And hence, as soon as they learn that he wants to have them demean themselves in the house of God in such a manner that He can by his Spirit make both the order of the services and the deportment of the worshippers as spiritual and as heavenly in their bearing as possible, in order that the means of grace may become

just as potent for good as possible to all who are in the assembly, they should be ready and willing to comply with his wishes at once. True worshippers will conform to the plainly revealed and explicit commands of the gospel, whether they understand the reason for the existence of those commands or not. It is quite sufficient for the true worshipper to know that God has good and sufficient reasons for giving those commands, which were revealed for the purpose of regulating the deportment of worshippers while engaged in conducting public worship, whether he understands these reasons or not.

It is our duty to comply with these just as cheerfully when we do not understand the reasons for them as when we do understand these reasons. It is not necessary for us to understand God's reasons for making this and that requirement. It is quite sufficient for us to know that he has made these requirements, and that he knows why he has made them. God knows that there is not a more potent agency which he can employ in the kingdom of heaven, for the purpose of influencing either man or woman for good, than a purified manhood and a purified womanhood, and a sanctified fatherhood and a sanctified motherhood, when energized by the Holy Ghost. And he claims both the right and the privilege of having his people demean themselves in such a way when they come into his presence, that they will not only be true to him and to their natural and spiritual constitution, but appear to others to be true, and also true to God's purpose of mercy towards lost men while engaged in the deeply solemn and impressive services of the Church. God can then consistently baptize the worshippers with his spirit, and fill their souls with such divine power that their countenances will be radiant with heavenly adorning, thus making the worship of the Lord's house just as efficient as possible, not simply by way of gaining the attention of impenitent persons, but by way of fixing their attention firmly upon the sublime truths which the preacher enunciates, and also upon those burning and glowing exemplifications of these truths which are presented before their very eyes, in the tearful eyes and glowing countenances of sanctified men and women while worshipping God in the beauty of holiness, so making the services of the Lord's house very fruitful in the conversion of sinners. God also knows that there is no instrumentality this

side of perdition that is so potent for doing injury to the souls of men, when put into the hands of the adversary of souls, as regenerated manhood and regenerated womanhood, provided that the adversary can in some way so manage as to induce Christian men and Christian women to assume some posture, or dress in some kind of attire, or demean themselves in some way whereby he can wield their example and influence directly against those commands of Christ, which were given expressly for the purpose of securing a perfectly consistent and orderly deportment on the part of the worshippers while engaged in public worship. And hence it is that the adversary of souls tries so hard to devise some method by which both men and women will be led to do or say that which is unmanly or unwomanly, or which is in some way opposed to some one or more of the commands of Christ, while they are professing to worship God. This point gained, the Holy Spirit is grieved, and the adversary of souls has not simply the unmanly or the unwomanly deportment of worshippers to use as means with which to divert the attention of the spectators away from God, and away from the proper train of thought which should be occupying the attention of all who are in the assembly; but he also has all that is pure and hallowed in the profession of these worshippers, and all that is sacred in the service in which they are engaged, to give force to the temptations which he places before their minds while calling their attention to the improper deportment of the worshippers, or to the wrong course of action suggested by their deportment. Hence, under certain circumstances, the influence exerted by the unscriptural deportment of worshippers becomes more potent for evil, even while they are in the house of God, than the more abhorrent conduct of abandoned and corrupt persons outside of the Church. The deportment of the most abandoned and vicious outside of the Church will frequently startle and arouse the amiable and moral to a proper sense of their danger, and turn them away from the wrong course. The deportment of the other class of persons may be the means of their taking the first steps in a downward course. It is not at all necessary, therefore, that there should be anything intentionally wrong in the conduct of worshippers in order to lead men astray. It is quite sufficient for the purpose of the adversary that there be some violation of

the commands of Christ. He can frequently accomplish his object better by means of the deportment of those who do not mean any harm than he can with the deportment of those who do mean harm. When people mean harm, their purpose is generally understood and their example is avoided. But where no harm is meant and the requirements of Christ are still violated, the example is frequently used by the adversary of souls, with terrible effect. It was for these reasons in part, no doubt, that the Holy Spirit moved the apostle to give instructions which were calculated to serve as an incentive to all worshippers to demean themselves while in the Church of God in such a way as to show by their conduct, not only that they do not mean harm, but that they do mean the highest possible measure of good which can be secured, both for themselves and for others when they come into the presence of God to worship.

THE INFLUENCE EXERTED BY PARENTS AT HOME.

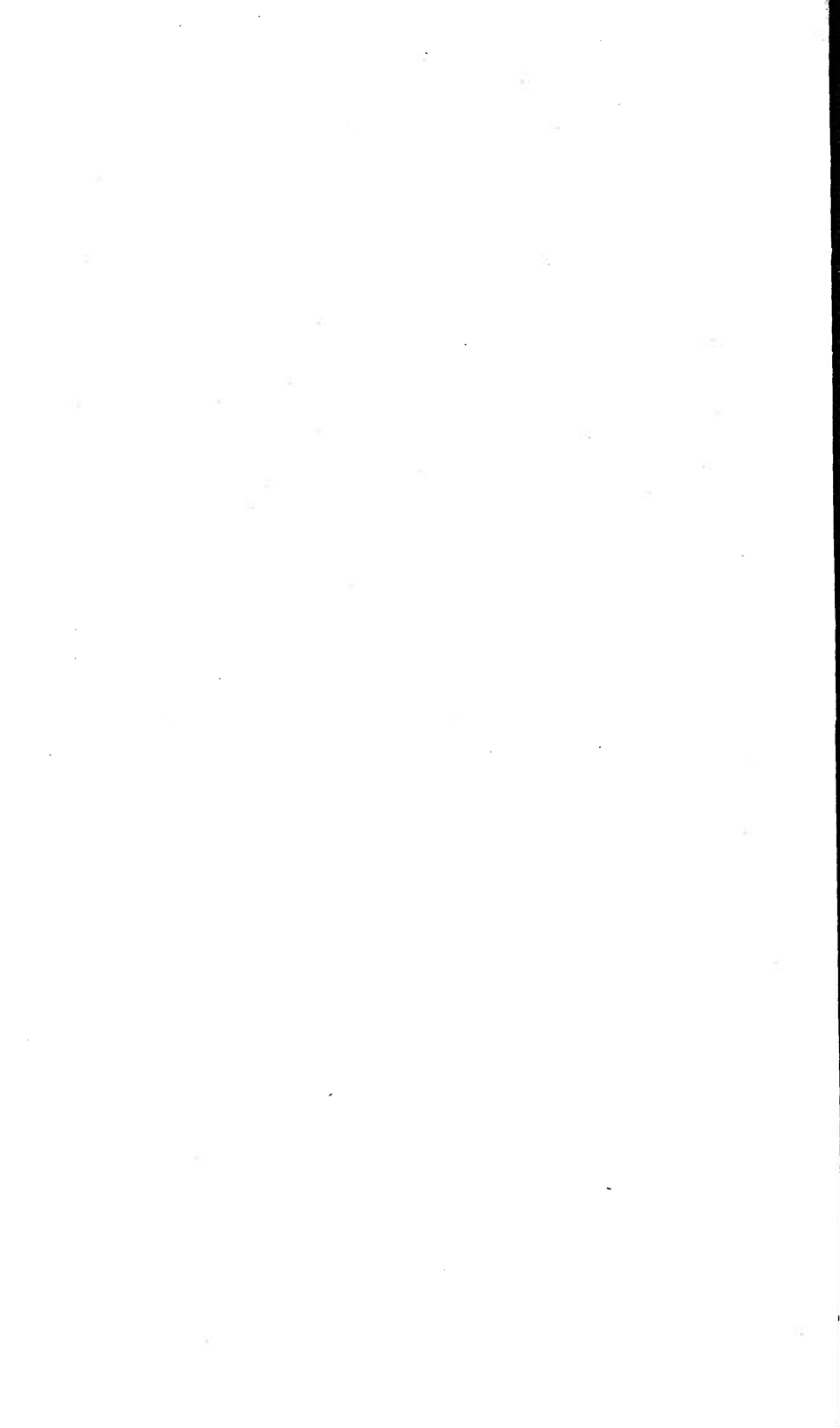
The same reasoning applies with equal force to parents when viewed in their proper relation to their children at home. It is not at all sufficient for parents to demean themselves in such a way that the most that can be said of them is, that they do not mean to set an unhallowed example before their children, nor to have anything that is injurious to morals or to religion about their premises or in their dwellings. A Christian family can not be built up in this way. There must be something vastly more positive and more potent for good than is contemplated in such a course of procedure as this. God knows that a Christian home cannot be built up without frequent consecration of parental desire to God, and a constant and persistent outpouring of the heart's most earnest desires for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the family. Christian parents will fail, and fail utterly, too, unless they take these ideas into their plan of home building. God has very clearly shown us in what way he regards the consecration of parental desire, and in what manner he treats those who offer earnest and importunate prayers for their offspring; in his treatment of the mother of the prophet Samuel and the mother of John the Baptist. 1 Sam. 1 : 9-14; Luke 1. He has also shown us how absolutely indispensable the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to the husband, in order that he

may be the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church, by requiring Christ to be baptized by the Holy Spirit before he entered upon the work of his mission as Head of the Church. And he has shown us how necessary it is that the wife be baptized by the Holy Spirit, in order that she may be subject to the husband as the Church is subject to Christ, by requiring the members of the Church to tarry in Jerusalem until the members were endued with power from on high, before they even attempted to carry into execution the requirements which the Head of the Church had laid down for their guidance and direction when preaching the gospel and when building up the Church. God is just as ready and as willing to hear the prayers of the head of a Christian family, when thoroughly consecrated to God, and willing to lay down his life, if need be, in order to secure the salvation of his family, as he was to hear the prayers of the Lord Jesus Christ. And he is just as willing to enable the wife to yield a ready and cheerful obedience to the requirements of the gospel, as unfolded and enforced by the head of the family, and to bless her endeavor to secure the submission of her children to Christ, as he was to bless the efforts of the disciples who belonged to the Church in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. But it is just as impossible for him to prevent the seeds of depravity already sown in the hearts of children whose parents have not consecrated their parental desire to God, nor secured the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit to rest upon their children in answer to prayer, while parents lead prayerless lives, as it would be to prevent the seeds of noxious plants from springing up in the soil of one's garden without making any effort to prevent them from growing, or taking any pains to seed the soil with precious seed. The government might close up every saloon and brothel in the land, and enact just as stringent laws as possible and take all the pains that can be taken to ensure the enforcement of these laws, still the seeds of intemperance and licentiousness and other vices will continue to spring up and grow in the dwellings of prayerless parents and unconsecrated Church members. And, sooner or later, these vile dens will be opened again and they will be supplied with inmates drawn directly from the homes of professing Christians, as well as from other sources, unless proper measures are taken to secure the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in these

homes. Hence, the absolute necessity not only of having the members of churches give faithful and earnest attention to the work of building up Christian homes as well as churches, but also of employing in this department of Christian labor, not those who are simply very good Christians according to the common acceptation of this term, for this class of Christians when engaged in this department of labor will frequently prove themselves to be about as injurious to the cause of Christ in the homes of the people as Christians well can be, particularly if they have a disposition which causes them to cry out, "Lord wilt thou that we call down fire out of heaven to consume them," when coming in contact with those who are more depraved and brutal than others. To be successful in this department of labor, we must have laborers who possess the Scriptural qualifications for the work, persons who know how to make frequent and earnest heartfelt consecration of themselves to God and to the welfare of souls, who can pray night and day if need be, in order to secure the power of God upon the homes and haunts where the gospel is to be proclaimed. Persons of this class will succeed where no others can. If this class of laborers can not be found in the churches, we must pray to the Lord of the harvest to raise up such and send them forth. The great demand of our age is not for the exercise of political talent and literary knowledge and oratorical power by women whose masculine characteristics are sure to give offence in the pulpit, and who will conceal from our daughters all knowledge of the true secret of woman's power over man, and who will prevent them from acquiring that nice power of spiritual discernment which enables the true deaconess and the female evangelist to see and realize, as no other class of women can, the actual wants of the people in their homes, and who have acquired that practical experience of these wants by years of faithful service, which is so necessary, and who have a rich and heavenly experience of those truths of the gospel which have been revealed by the Holy Spirit, for the express purpose of meeting the wants of the people in their homes. Our greatest need at the present time is the vigorous exercise of the gifts and graces of the true deaconess and female evangelist, right in the homes of the people and in assemblies called together for the express purpose of securing revivals of religion in the homes of the

people, with the view of laying a sure foundation for similar revivals in the Church.

But unless the most earnest and persistent and prayerful effort is made by those who are called to preach the gospel in the homes of the people, to secure a baptism of the inmates of our dwellings by the Holy Spirit, the adversary of souls will continue to make the prayerless lives and worldly example of parents a far more potent and efficient agency in turning the hearts of children and youth away from God, home and heaven, towards the saloon, the gambling den and the brothel, than the grosser exhibitions of depravity which are to be found in the haunts of vice can be, for the simple reason that the children of pious parents seldom come in contact with these grosser forms of vice, and when they do come in contact with them, they are generally disgusted and turned away from these haunts. But the milder and seemingly less injurious manifestations of the same or similar forms of depravity, when dealt out in homeopathic doses under the garb of religion, by careless and worldly-minded professors, are almost certain to be received into the hearts of the young, and thus they do their soul-destroying work by a process that is as fatal as it is gradual and certain.



DEACONESSES AND FEMALE EVANGELISTS.

III.

Professor Sherwin, late conductor of music in several of the prominent churches in different parts of the country, informed the writer, a few years since, that he knew of a family living on a small farm, where the mother, following the example of Hannah on entering into the marriage relation, not only consecrated her maternal desire to God, but earnestly prayed that God would give her grace to prepare her sons for the gospel ministry in case any such were given to her. It was her exalted privilege to become the mother of six boys. She kept on in prayer to God from day to day, and at the same time did all that she could do by both example and precept to carry out the plan which she had formed at the beginning of her married life. But when the first-born was nearly man grown, the husband and father was removed by death. The widowed mother was thrown into a perfect whirlpool of doubt and despair. She soon rallied, however, and called to mind the promise to be the widow's God and the father of the fatherless, and resolved to pray more earnestly, and work more persistently, and to trust God more implicitly than before. Taking the oldest son by the hand, she said, "Now that your father has been called home to heaven, you must take charge of the farm and help me care for your brothers, and I will assist you as best I can and prepare you for college, during the evening hours. If you are faithful your brothers and I will, by the grace of God, conduct you through college and you will be able to preach the gospel ultimately, just as if your father had not died." In a comparatively short time the oldest son was fitted for college. The products of the little farm, with much economy, supplied the wants of the family and left a small margin for college expenses. When the oldest son went to college, she took the second son and placed him in charge of the farm in the same way. And then the next, and so on until each of the six boys had learned

to manage the farm in turn and all had completed their course of study. The mother's heart was gladdened by hearing them all proclaim the glad news of salvation, and her soul was rejoiced in seeing them all settled over churches. Here certainly was a boy's brigade that was worth having. And what the churches of Christ need in our day, is the formation of an indefinite number of this kind of brigades. God's plan is to have the gospel of Christ infused into the hearts of our sons and daughters by those who, in addition to preaching the gospel to them in their homes, live the gospel before them in such a way that they can no more fail to drink in its precious truths than they can fail to drink in the precious nourishment that is drawn from the mother's breast. The efforts put forth by the mother of those boys while preparing them for their future mission in life were worth a thousand times as much to the Church and the world as her work would have been if she had left those boys to grow up in idleness and fill the graves of paupers, or drunkards, or gamblers, while she went from place to place lecturing on politics. That woman had better men to represent her at the polls, and in the halls of legislation, and in the gospel ministry, than any whom she could have selected if she had attended all the political caucuses that could have been held during her life-time. And when she appears at the bar of God, she will have these to represent her there of whom she will have abundant occasion to be thankful, while those women who have made it their aim to vie with men and with each other in the contest for positions of authority will be filled with shame and remorse.

There is a town in the central part of Massachusetts, where lived a very pious and devoted couple with a family of ten children. The mother was a very prayerful woman, and, as their house was small, she adopted the practice of repairing to the barn every day for the purpose of praying for her offspring. The youngest son observed that his mother went to the barn regularly every day, but knew not the reason why. He secreted himself in the hay-mow in order that he might ascertain what his mother went there for. He soon heard her voice in prayer. She began with the first-born, calling him by name, and then went on waxing more and more fervent in her supplications as she proceeded until she came to the youngest. She then broke

completely down and could only pray in sobs and sighs and groans. "What!" said the youngest son to himself, "is my mother here praying for me every day of my life and I have never yet prayed for myself at all?" He was struck under deep conviction for sin, was soon converted, and afterwards became one of the most successful pastors in the State. That mother lived to see all of the ten children become members of Baptist churches. The oldest son became an eminent pastor, afterwards founded a female seminary from which were graduated about thirty classes of young women, the larger portion of whom were converted to God. The institution was afterwards given to the Baptist denomination. This mother performed her life work at a period when the use of intoxicating drinks, even by ministers of the gospel, was more common than it now is by the average laymen, but neither son nor daughter became a drunkard nor an inmate of a saloon or gambling den. She would have laughed at the very idea of having those sons or daughters put on badges of blue or white ribbon, in order that they might be known and recognized as pure men and pure women, or as a means by which they might be enabled to keep their good resolutions unbroken. She would not have been willing that her children should be taught that any sort of resolution could be good unless made with a firm reliance on the grace of Almighty God. Nor would she have them kept in ignorance of the precious doctrine, that they were to be kept from falling by the power of God through faith, if at all. Having taught them by both example and precept to enter upon their life work in this way, she was fully prepared to send them forth into the world, not doubting that she should be well represented by them in whatever positions they might be placed, whether in the halls of Congress, or at the bar, or in the ministry. Such representatives as these never prove false to their constituents. It will generally be found that the extraordinary career of usefulness which has been enjoyed by the purest and best men whom the world has ever known has been begun, not in the caucus room, nor in the political arena, nor even in the day school, but in the nursery and at the fireside, and in those acts of consecration which have been performed by the mother which are too sacred for the public eye to gaze upon. These acts of consecration and devotion can not be successfully performed

while the mother is giving her attention to the affairs of state, much less while she is vying with men in the contest for political honors. Nor can our daughters be qualified for their future positions at home or in the Church by that class of teachers who make it their aim to achieve distinction and win renown in the political world. Even in those cases where devout and prayerful women become the companions of men who fill the highest positions of authority, as did Queen Esther, if they would be successful in accomplishing the mission which God has assigned to them, it is absolutely necessary for them to retire to their closets of devotion and fast and pray if they would obtain that power, which, when shining through their countenances, secures absolute control over the heart of the most brutal of kings and causes them to exclaim, "What is thy request and it shall be done to the half of the kingdom?"

A VERY IMPORTANT AUXILIARY TO PULPIT PREACHING.

Hence, it is very easy to see that if, in addition to the ordinary means of grace now existing in the pulpit of the Church proper, we also had groups of women composed in part of such praying mothers as the two to whom reference has been made, and in part of such young women as those two mothers were before they were married, and should employ these in proclaiming the gospel of the home institution in the homes of the people and in assemblies called for the express object of teaching the members of families how to build up Christian homes during one part of the Lord's day, and in offering up their fervent and effectual prayers with other worshippers in the assembly where "all came together in one place" for public worship during the other part of the Lord's day, we should have a very valuable auxiliary to the present preaching force of the Church. And the preaching would be done in such a way as to make the home subservient to the purpose for which it was instituted. If we should go still further and add to this force of gospel laborers a few of the most pious and devoted women who have been profligates, but who, on being soundly converted to God, have shown such eagerness to give expression to their love to Christ as to make them willing to wash his feet with their tears and wipe them with the hair of their head, if opportunity should

be presented, and should employ these in preaching the gospel in the haunts of vice and misery on the one hand and in stirring up the members of churches to make suitable effort to reclaim the fallen, we should have a still larger and more efficient preaching force in the Church. We might then go still farther and add a few of the most pious and devoted laymen who could be selected, and employ them both as deacons and as colporteurs when doing evangelistic work among feeble churches. We should then have a working force which, when set vigorously at work in proper order in almost any community or town, under the supervision of a pastor or of a missionary of the Convention, would enable us to give the community a practical exemplification of what constitutes a live apostolic church. This is an institution which very many communities and towns know nothing about, except as they read about it in the New Testament. If the reader will turn to Luke 7:36-50; also 8:1-4; Acts 1:14; Acts 2:47, and read very carefully and call to mind the fact that "the ways" of the apostle Paul were in Christ, and will then look very observingly at the greetings which are recorded in the later part of his epistles to the Corinthians and the Romans, and notice the manner in which he refers to those who labored with him in the gospel, he will see that both Christ and his apostles must have had in their employ groups of gospel laborers very similar to those to which the writer has called attention. And unquestionably they kept these helpers not only vigorously employed, but they taught them to work according to God's plan and method and not according to their own notions or sense of fitness; much less did they allow them to follow their own preferences or inclinations, either in the Church or in the homes of the people. God's plan has been from the very beginning to build up the home first and not the Church first. And in building up Christian homes he would have us build them up in such a manner that the members of the family will be fitted for their positions in the Church more thoroughly than they possibly could be, if introduced directly from the world into the Church.

HOUSEHOLD PREACHERS HOW QUALIFIED.

The instructions given by Christ to Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42); and to other women in whose houses he tarried,

were, without doubt, as truly intended to fit them for their work as teachers and exemplifiers of the truths of the gospel in the home institution, as the instructions given by him to the apostles were to prepare them for their mission as founders of churches. And the glorious results which must have been produced in many of the homes and haunts of the city of Jerusalem by the women, immediately after they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, whereby the occupants of so many dwellings were not only soundly converted, but enabled to continue steadfast in the faith while both the preachers and their converts were held in favor with all the people, were due to the admirable instructions given by Christ prior to his death and not to any new revelations made by the Holy Spirit, for the work of the Spirit did not consist in making new revelations to them at this time, but in bringing to their remembrance the things which he had previously taught. And inasmuch as Christ did not include these women among the apostles, it is very evident that his purpose and aim from the beginning was to impart to them, not that knowledge and experience of gospel truths which is especially applicable to the Church, but that knowledge and experience of gospel truth which is especially applicable to the home institution. Beyond all reasonable doubt, it was his custom, when discoursing to those women who were to be teachers and preachers, to present the truths of the gospel in such a way that he would be constantly preparing those who were called to preach, for their mission as preachers in the homes of the people, and for the specific work of building up Christian homes. These should be as thoroughly fitted for their work in the homes as men who are to preach mainly to the churches should be for their mission in building up churches. Christ adopted this course of procedure simply and solely because it was the will of the Father that the members of the two sexes should be equally and properly prepared for their mission. It is not more true that some men are so constituted by the God of nature, and so renewed by the God of grace, as to be qualified for the work of the ministry in the Church proper, than it is true that some women are so constituted and so renewed, as to be qualified for the work of the ministry in the church that is in the house. And the work of the gospel ministry cannot be successfully

accomplished, nor can the requirements of the great commission be carried out without having those who are to preach the gospel to the inmates of dwellings, with the view of teaching them how to build up Christian homes, just as thoroughly qualified for their work as those who preach to churches are for theirs. Every person who has had any considerable experience in preaching to profligates and abandoned persons knows that, in order to be highly successful, there must be, not only great minuteness of detail in presenting the truth, but a corresponding minuteness of detail while listening to the conversation of those who are giving account of their sins and follies, in order that the gospel may be faithfully applied and heartily received, so that proper confession may be made and a new life may be begun. And no being ever trod the earth who has shown such wonderful power of adaptation when presenting the truth as Christ has shown; and more particularly when preaching to immoral persons who often times are very hard to reach. We have a notable illustration of this in the case of the woman at the well. He not only took a great deal of pains to secure her undivided attention at the very outset by asking for a cup of water, thus bridging over the chasm which existed between Jews and Samaritans, but when he came to that part of his discourse which pertained to her past life, he must have entered into the details with great accuracy and precision in order to have drawn from her the confession that he told her all things whatsoever she had done. And to suppose that the women who, on being baptized by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, could have gone into the homes and haunts of the people and have wrought those wonderful works of grace among the inmates of so many dwellings, whereby they were not only soundly converted to God, but enabled to continue steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and the breaking of bread and prayers, while preachers themselves were in favor with all the people, without any specific knowledge of what they were to preach and how they were to preach, is simply preposterous. We can not account for the glorious achievements which were wrought by female preachers in the homes and haunts of Jerusalem, in connection with the efforts of male preachers, except on the supposition that they had been previously taught by Christ precisely the same truths concerning the proper relationship

subsisting between husband and wife, parents and children, which the apostle Paul so aptly presents in his epistle to the Ephesians, and knew how to hold themselves in subjection to those whom the Holy Spirit had set over them in the gospel. They must also have learned from Christ's own lips, while being themselves led into the kingdom of heaven, precisely how to acquire that accurate knowledge concerning the real wants of their auditors which enabled them to apply the truths of the gospel with that minuteness of detail, which is so absolutely necessary in order to secure genuine conversion and steadfastness in the faith after conversion has taken place. The success of these household preachers can be accounted for in no other way, except by supposing that the Holy Spirit called to their remembrance the experience of their former lives and the truths taught by Christ, and the methods of Christ which they learned from his own lips. The Holy Spirit energized all of these means and methods at the same time that he gave them a heavenly experience of the truths of the gospel in their relation to the home institution. Hence, it became as easy and as natural for them to preach the gospel of the home institution in the homes of the people, and in assemblies called for the purpose of teaching the people to build up Christian homes, as it was for the apostles and male evangelists to preach to the Church proper.

PAUL'S INSTRUCTIONS WITH REGARD TO DEACONESSSES AND
FEMALE EVANGELISTS.

If the reader will turn to 1 Tim. 5, and read the entire chapter carefully, he will find that the apostle is here giving certain very positive and explicit instructions which the Holy Spirit had revealed to him, with regard to the appointment of elders or church officers, both male and female, and also with regard to the deportment of pastors towards such officers. The same apostle has given similar instructions in Titus 2:3-5. Judging from the manner in which the apostle writes, one would naturally infer that some of the brethren had fallen into the practice of thrusting their widows into the office of deaconess, in order that they might be relieved of the necessity of supporting them themselves. The fact that the apostle was moved

by the Holy Spirit to give instructions concerning widows, in connection with the instructions given with regard to the appointment of deacons and deaconesses, not only proves that Christ and his apostles had groups of gospel laborers in their employ similar to those which the writer has suggested, but it also proves that those laborers in the gospel had already been in the service of the Church long enough to admit of being thoroughly proved and generally recognized as members of the official board of the churches. Moreover, it is very evident from Paul's statements that a very considerable amount of inconvenience had been experienced on the part of those who had the oversight of the household department of church work, in consequence of the fact that certain young widows had brought reproach upon the cause of Christ by becoming idlers and busy-bodies and tattlers, when sent forth on their mission. They seem to have preached the gospel in one house and tattled in the next, and got up a flirtation in the house beyond, judging from the instructions given by the apostle. There was also a class of female preachers in the days of the apostles, who were called prophets, who seem to have had power to proclaim the gospel by inspiration, as it were, so abundant was the power of the Spirit bestowed upon them. These also must have gone from house to house preaching the gospel, or else they must have exercised their gifts in assemblies called for the express purpose of building up the cause of Christ in the homes of the people, in the towns where they lived, for they were not allowed to preach in the Church proper. Moreover the instructions given by the apostle, with regard to female preachers, are always so framed as to imply that they were to impart instruction which has a direct bearing upon the welfare of the home institution, and never so framed as to imply that they were to impart instruction which has a direct bearing on the work of building up the Church proper. One man had four daughters, all of them virgins, who were prophets. Acts 21:9. Unless his was an exception to the average of families, this class of preachers must have been somewhat numerous, and judging from the number of whole families which must have been Christianized before the Church in Jerusalem was fully organized, and the number of families Christianized on the island of Crete at the time Paul left Titus there, to complete the Church organi-

zation by appointing officers or elders, both male and female, in every city, it is evident that there must have been a very considerable number of these prophets, as well as deaconesses, in the employ of the apostle Paul, during the entire period which preceded the appointment of church officers by Titus on that island. It is highly probable that the female prophets labored under the supervision of the deaconesses, who, like the deacons, were permanent officers, and received ordination only when they had been proved by previous services as temporary helpers to be worthy to fill this high and important office. That the deacons and deaconesses both received appointment, with the view of having them labor in the gospel and not simply with the view of having them serve tables or attend to the finances of the Church exclusively, is evident from the fact that they must be men and women who had their own children in good subjection to Christ, and not simply in subjection to their own carnal authority, which is very bad subjection and does not imply that the children in such subjection are faithful children. Titus 1: 6. We cannot suppose that the apostles adopted the practice of sending young female preachers forth to preach from house to house unprotected, or without at least one other person with them to join with them in prayer and claim the promised blessing. Most likely, therefore, the deaconesses went forth with the female prophets, the younger being thus relieved of the more responsible part of the work of teaching the wives and mothers the details of home building, in consequence of the fact that the deaconesses took the general oversight, while the prophets did a very considerable part of the preaching and talking with the anxious. The deaconesses knew by experience precisely what instructions to give in order to teach their auditors how to show piety first at home. The question as to the proper disposal of those who were widows having been brought to the attention of the apostle, he very naturally was led to give instruction with regard to this matter in the same connection that the subject was brought before him. Hence, the apostle gives direction, first with regard to that portion of them whose ripe experience and rare attainments showed not only that they were well qualified for the office of deaconess, but worthy of all honor; then of those who were so aged and so destitute as to really need the benefactions of the Church and

had no relatives to provide for them; then of those who had relatives who were able to support them; then of those who were not qualified for the office of deaconess by reason of their lack of experience but were of marriageable age. These should marry and make homes for themselves and for their children, if they had such, thus avoiding the temptations which were likely to make tattlers and busy-bodies of them rather than good preachers of the gospel, when sent forth on their mission.

In 1 Tim. 5:3, the apostle says: "Honor widows who are widows indeed." It has been supposed by some that he intends to have Timothy enroll these among those who were to be supported by the Church. Again in verse 9, he says: Let not a widow be taken into the number nor let none be enrolled as a widow, as it reads in the revised version, under three-score years old, having been the wife of one man, well reported of for good works, if she hath brought up children, if she hath used hospitality to strangers, if she hath washed saints' feet, if she hath relieved the afflicted, if she hath diligently followed every good work. But the younger widows refuse, for when they have waxed wanton against Christ they desire to marry, having condemnation, because they have rejected their first faith. And withal they learn to be idle, going from house to house, and not only idle but tattlers also, and busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not to. I desire, therefore, that the younger widows marry, bear children, rule the household, give no occasion to the adversary for reviling, for already some are turned aside after Satan. If any man or woman hath widows let them relieve them, and let not the Church be burdened, that it may relieve them that are widows indeed. On the supposition that all those widows who were sixty years of age were to be enrolled among the number who were to be supported by the charities of the Church, we must account for the idea of honoring that class of persons who possess all of the various qualifications here designated, by making church paupers of them and excluding all other widows, except those who possess these rare qualities and this rich experience in the management of household affairs, from the number who are to be supported by the Church, no matter how sore their need, nor how numerous their infirmities. For according to this view, none are entitled to support by the Church unless they are sixty years of age and

possess the many rare qualifications for teaching the young women, which are mentioned by the apostle Paul. It is not consistent with the teaching of the apostles elsewhere, nor according to the dictates of justice, to argue that the inspired apostle has taught us that the churches of Christ should refuse to support any other widows, besides those who possess all the qualifications mentioned in the text. Hence, we are constrained to believe that the apostle intended to convey the idea that, while other women who possessed certain specified qualifications corresponding to those of the men who were appointed deacons might be enrolled as deaconesses, if the writer understands the apostle, no women should be thus enrolled as a widow, except that class of widows who were sixty years of age and who also possessed the qualifications here enumerated. The period of life designated and the qualifications here mentioned, being regarded as affording sufficient evidence that they had already been proved by the many admirable services already rendered, and that they were fully prepared for admission into the office, so that they need not be proved before using the office, as in the case of deacons and deaconesses under ordinary circumstances. In 1 Tim. 2:11 the apostle when speaking of the deaconesses says, "They must be grave, not slanderers, temperate in all things." Having in 1 Tim. 3:15 stated the fact that his object in writing was to show Timothy how he ought to demean himself in the church of God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, and having given in 1 Tim. 3:8-14 the necessary instructions with regard to the appointment of both deacons and deaconesses, with a minute account of the qualifications required, it was not necessary for the apostle to state the fact that the enrolment referred to in 1 Tim. 5:9 was to be an enrolment among the officers of the Church. This might very properly be taken for granted since there were those who had been disposed to enroll even such widows as had not the proper qualifications among the officers of the Church, in order that they might be relieved of the necessity of supporting them. To meet the exigencies of the case, the apostle was very naturally led by the Holy Spirit to place the standard of character and attainment, when referring to those who were to be introduced into the sacred office as widows, high enough to ensure a full possession of all of the

scriptural qualifications which were required of those very excellent women who were the wives of one husband, and had been proved by serving for a suitable length of time on the board of temporary helpers, or the standing committee of the churches as we should call them in our day. Every intelligent person can readily see how perfectly natural it was for the apostle to speak of enrolling a certain class of women among the officers of the Church as widows, under the circumstances, in order to distinguish them from those who were enrolled as officers of the Church, from among the married women. The fact that the sacred writer requires that the widows under consideration must have been the wife of one husband, 1 Tim. 5 : 9, a requirement corresponding exactly to that designated among the qualifications for the office of deacon, can not easily be accounted for on the supposition that these most estimable women were to be enrolled among those who were to be supported by the charitable funds of the Church. To place that class of widows who were in full possession of the numerous qualifications mentioned by the apostle among those who were to be supported by charity, could hardly be called honoring them. But when honored by enrolling them among the permanent officers of the Church, it would become their duty and privilege to sit with the other Church officers on the official board, and participate in their deliberations, and also to take the oversight, under the supervision of the apostles and pastors of churches, of those women, whether prophets, or teachers, or evangelists, whose duty it was to share with the deaconesses in the divinely appointed work of teaching the young women to love their husbands and to love their children, to be sober minded, chaste, house-guards—literally the word house in Greek, being the only word used for home, the phrase undoubtedly means guardians of the home institution—and to be in subjection to their own husbands that the word of God be not blasphemed, plainly implying that if the wives were not in subjection to their husbands the word of God would be blasphemed. Titus 2 : 4, 5. It should be observed in this connection that the same apostle, when referring to the female elders or deaconesses, aged women it reads in our version, says in Titus 2 : 3 that the aged women likewise be reverent in demeanor, not slanderers; the same term used in the epistle to Timothy

when referring to deaconesses, nor enslaved to much wine, teachers of that which is good that they may teach thus and thus. The qualifications here mentioned are precisely those which fit women for the office of deaconess. The reason which the apostle gives for having the women now under consideration possess these admirable qualifications is that they may teach the young women thus and thus. It is not usually the case that this kind of accuracy and precision is observed by the sacred writers in those cases where everything is to be left to the discretion of an indefinite number of aged men or aged women. Hence, the writer feels obliged to insist upon it, that the language here used by the inspired penman be so interpreted as to require just as great accuracy and precision in the enrolment of the persons who are here required to teach, as in the things to be taught. And if the statements of Paul are interpreted in this way, the members of our churches, like the members of the churches constituted by the apostles, will be compelled to look out from among the more gifted and truly pious and devoted women, those and those only, who, according to their best judgment, formed under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit, obtained in answer to prayer, actually possess the qualifications here designated and introduce them into the office of deaconess, and enroll them among the officers of the Church. These, and these only, should be thus honored on the official board. If there be widows who are prayerful and devout and yet not quite sixty years of age, let them serve among the temporary helpers, or standing committee, until they are sixty years of age, but let not the command of God be broken on any account. If the women who are of age, sixty years, together with the experience acquired during those years and the numerous other qualifications for the deaconess' office, mentioned by the apostle Paul, have not proved themselves to be worthy of all honor and thoroughly qualified for the office of deaconess every way, it is safe to say that no women in the churches of the apostolic age ever did prove themselves to be worthy of this honor. And the very idea of keeping such women as these out of the office of deaconess, and enrolling them among those who were to be sustained by the charitable funds of the Church and compelling them to be idle, when their presence on the official board and in the oversight of the house-

hold department of religious instruction would be worth the largest salary which could possibly be raised for them, is an idea too absurd to be entertained by any really sensible man, much less by a Christian scholar. And yet this is the idea maintained by many distinguished commentators. It is a fact well known to these commentators that certain sects were in the habit of setting apart a portion of their widows for religious teachers, and designating them as such, a practice which is easily accounted for on the supposition that they had the very habit which the apostle Paul is here endeavoring to correct, handed down to them by those predecessors, who knowing the fact that certain widows, when possessing certain specified qualifications for office, were to be introduced into the office of deaconess as widows and not as women who were the wives of one husband, and otherwise properly qualified, continued the practice of enrolling as many as they well could in order to get rid of supporting them themselves by saddling the expense of their support on to the Church of God. The fact that these sects fell into the habit which became characteristic of them, shows conclusively that there must have been a source from which their practice sprang. And nothing would be more natural than for them to pervert the instruction given by the apostle in the course of time, if they ever had this instruction, or to pervert the usage of enrolling a certain class, and that class only, which usage must have been established by Christ himself while on earth or by a revelation subsequent to his death, if it be true that Paul's "ways" were in Christ and Paul's gospel was from Christ.

WHY THE YOUNG WIDOWS WERE NOT TO BE ENROLLED.

With these considerations before us, it is easy to see why the apostle was led by the Holy Spirit to reject all widows who were under sixty years of age, on the ground that they would wax wanton against Christ and might become idlers and tattlers also, and busybodies in other men's matters. These courses of conduct would be injurious enough among persons who should be sustained by the charities of the Church. But they would be hurtful in the extreme, if practised by a class of female teachers whose special duty it was to take the oversight

of the household department of church work and coöperate with those who were engaged in the work of preaching the gospel of the home institution in the homes of the people, and in conducting meetings for the express purpose of Christianizing irreligious homes and converting them into little "house churches," preparatory to the formation of churches proper, which were to be organized by combining these Christian families in a single organization for the benefit of the entire community residing in a given city or town. To do a work of this sort, and do it well, would require just as high order of talent, and just as deep toned piety, and as rare tact and skill on the part of the deaconess as would be required of a pastor of a community church. For in addition to a proper understanding of those truths of the gospel which pertain directly to the Christian home, there should also be a proper understanding of all of those truths by means of which the relationship between Christian families is kept up, and the members of such families are so reared that the young, when grown to marriageable age, will not marry into irreligious families. The principal difference between the qualifications of the pastor of a church and a deaconess would be the practical experience which the deaconess has in the management of household affairs, whereby she is able to adapt her instructions to the actual wants of those who are endeavoring to apply the truths of the gospel directly to the inmates of the dwelling, while at home, in such a manner as to make the home institution subservient to the purpose of God in Christianizing irreligious homes, and preparing the members of the family for their future positions in the Church and in the world. Unquestionably the churches of our day are losing very much in many ways, in consequence of the fact that the Christian family is now without its proper overseers to teach parents and children, and more especially wives and mothers, who are, in reality, the most important factors in building up the home institution, precisely how to so guide the house as to make its various appointments conducive to the welfare of the family and of the Church also. In many of the homes of Christian people, at the present time, there is absolutely nothing that can be properly regarded as a preparatory training of the different members of the family for their future positions as heads of families, or even for their positions as members of

churches. In some families a process is constantly going on which is unfitting children and youth for their future positions in life. And at the same time, there are influences brought to bear upon the young in the various places of business and amusement in which they are employed during the week, which are undoing all that is being done for their moral and religious training in the Church and in the Sunday school during the Sabbath. Where the young are allowed to get their meals in one place and sleep in another, and labor in establishments in which the foulest-mouthed persons are often listened to with the closest attention, and seek their recreation in the saloon and the theatre, there is but small hope of making useful members of churches of them, even if they are converted to God. The existing state of things will continue, however, until those whom God has set in the body as has pleased him to take the oversight of those who are endeavoring to build up Christian homes, and to teach them in what way these various obstacles can be overcome, are sought out and placed over this all important department of labor. The very accuracy and precision of the apostle's language when giving reasons for rejecting all widows who were under sixty years of age, when viewed in connection with his instructions with regard to married women who were to serve in the office of deaconess, who might be less than sixty years of age if otherwise properly qualified and proved before using the office, shows very conclusively that the widows who were to be accepted and enrolled were not to be enrolled simply that they might enjoy the charities of the Church, but that they might fill positions which, if occupied by those who were even liable to become busybodies and tattlers, very great harm would be done the cause of Christ. The apostle is manifestly aiming to secure the appointment of such persons as would not only refrain from falling into the injurious habits referred to, when going from house to house for the purpose of preaching the gospel, but who, on being introduced into that very important and permanent office which is to be filled by those, and those only, who are fully competent to have the oversight of the household department of church work, will see that the wives and mothers are properly instructed in those truths which they ought to understand, and who will also see that none of the preachers who are under their supervision bring reproach upon

the cause of Christ by any disorderly conduct while engaged in the glorious work of preaching the gospel from house to house. The fact that the apostle speaks of the ordination of the officers of the Church in the following chapter of the same epistle, and in such a way as to plainly imply that his attention is still occupied with the same subject that engaged his attention in the previous chapter and urges Timothy to lay hands suddenly on no one, makes it still more certain that the enrolment under consideration was to place these widows among the permanent officers of the Church. And it is precisely here that we discern the wisdom and benevolence of our heavenly Father in bestowing such admirable gifts and such abundant qualifications as the apostle here mentions upon women who, having been so remarkably successful in building up their own homes and in making themselves so variously and so abundantly useful, on being deprived of their homes in consequence of the death of their husbands, were prepared to sympathize with others who were in like condition with themselves, and also with those who were in the same condition that they were in some twenty or thirty years previous, perhaps. The young wives and the young mothers who belonged to the Church, together with multitudes of others who did not belong to the Church, needed the benefit to be derived from the fervent piety, rare tact, and ripe experience of these godly mothers a thousand times more than they needed the able sermons of pastors. And yet, strange to say, the enemy of all righteousness has managed thus far in very many communities, for hundreds of years, to keep this class of women and others who are very nearly like them, together with the young women who are called of God to labor under their supervision, out of the offices which the Head of the Church established for the express purpose of giving them official position and proper standing among the officers of his Church, while at the same time he has kept hundreds and thousands of young wives and mothers utterly destitute of those hallowed instructions, and still more hallowed sympathies, which the Head of the Church has so richly provided for them and which no beings on earth have any right whatever to keep from these wives and mothers, nor from their husbands and children. God only knows how extensively and how imperatively the services of these godly widows and mothers are needed

in our homes and in irreligious families at the present time. There is also an imperative demand for the services of those female evangelists who show great aptness in the use of the scriptures in leading souls to Christ in the Sunday school and in the home. Their services are often invaluable, especially when dealing with those of their own sex who can not enter into religious conversation with the pastor or any male teacher, with that familiarity which is necessary, in order to enable them to expound those truths of the gospel which they might easily apply, if these timid inquirers were able to inform the teacher with regard to those phases of their experience which can easily be presented to the deaconess or female evangelist.

THE ORDINATION OF DEACONESSSES AND FEMALE
EVANGELISTS.

That was unquestionably a very wise suggestion of the Holy Spirit which led the apostle to command Timothy to lay hands suddenly on no one. Nothing would be more unwise nor more injurious to the cause of Christ than for the members of churches to select for ordination, either candidates for the office of deaconess or for female evangelist, persons who on examination do not give evidence of having been called of God to engage in the work now under consideration, simply because they are known and recognized among the members of the Church as very pious and devoted Christians. A person may be a very pious and a very devoted Christian, according to the popular acceptation of this term, and yet be far more injurious to the cause of Christ, when placed in certain positions, than an impenitent person possibly can be. Our opponents in certain denominations now have men who are filling some of the highest positions within their denomination as teachers in theological schools and as trustees who have charge of these schools, who are seizing the very foundations of those institutions and handing them over to their partisans in the name of "a progressive theology." And yet these men know that the brethren who contributed towards the endowment never would have given a single dollar if they had known that the funds would ever be used as they are now being employed. The men who are guilty of these grave offences are, many of them, known

and recognized as very good Christians. Having been taught from childhood up that it does not make any difference whether they follow the example of Christ in baptism or not, if they are only Christians, and having been in the habit of interpreting certain portions of Scripture in such a way as to make the inspired text support their preconceived opinions, they very naturally apply the same processes of reasoning to the endowment funds which they have been applying to the ordinance of baptism. Hence, it becomes very easy to satisfy themselves that it does not make any particular difference who have the endowment funds of a theological school, provided that they are only Christians. And being themselves Christians of the progressive sort, they are easily led to believe that the advocates of "progressive theology" ought to have the preference above all others in the use of these funds, notwithstanding the fact that they know perfectly well that those who founded these schools of learning could never have been induced to indorse the views held by those who are now teachers in these seminaries. The men who are making such unjustifiable appropriations of these funds are doing more, probably, to make infidels and skeptics of the lawyers and the judges who try these cases in court than any other class of men can do. And the name of God is being blasphemed all over the land in consequence of the conduct of these men. And God is showing his abhorrence of their conduct by moving spiritually minded persons to keep away from both meeting-houses and schools of learning that are obtained in this way. The same principle applies to the matter now under consideration. All of those processes of reasoning and interpretation of the Scriptures by means of which certain female preachers make it appear that women are not to be in subjection to those commands of Christ, which were given for the purpose of teaching them how to demean themselves while in the Church, are only disciplining both the minds and hearts of their auditors for a similar perversion of other portions of the word of God. These teachers are also grieving the Holy Spirit from their hearts, and, sooner or later, will prepare their hearers for their future work in perverting whatever texts of Scripture stand in the way of their preconceived opinions concerning other doctrines. And hence, though very well meaning Christians themselves, and firm supporters of the home insti-

tution, at heart, they are sowing those very seeds of error in the minds and hearts of their hearers, which will make more or less of them the very worst destroyers of the peace and happiness of the homes of the people which the coming generation will have. There is no help for this. We shall reap in the coming generation what is sown in this. It is not possible for any religious teacher to discard those purposes of mercy which God has formed for the salvation of men, and refuse to become a willing agent in his hands in carrying these purposes of mercy into effect, and not grieve the Holy Spirit away from one's heart and home, and, sooner or later, from the Church also. And when this is done, the reign of the adversary of souls will be inaugurated in those very positions where the Spirit of God ought to reign, and would reign, if the word of God was faithfully expounded and properly applied.

DIVERS MANIFESTATIONS OF DIVINE POWER NEEDED.

There are divers kinds of power exercised by the Supreme Being in the general assembly of the first-born in heaven, when God is worshipped. There is power in sovereignty emanating from the omnipotent Father through the Son and through the Holy Ghost, power in authority acting through the Son upon all who are in authority, causing them to feel the commanding presence of God; power in subjection, acting through the Holy Spirit, causing all worshippers to subject themselves to God in acts of praise and adoration. There is also power in complexity, by means of which all the different qualities and attributes which distinguish the personality of each person or being are properly controlled and made to act in unison, causing each worshipper to render the most perfect service which his powers and faculties will allow. There is also power in unity, by means of which all the worshippers are enabled to act with one accord and in perfect harmony with all three persons of the Trinity. There should be divers manifestations of power also in the public worship of God in every church on earth, and also in the worship of every family. There must be divers manifestations of divine power acting in and through the worshippers, in order to make these services as efficient as possible in accomplishing the objects which God has in view, by requiring us to worship

him. The most casual observer can see that the power wielded by the father of a family is not in all respects like that wielded by the mother, either when engaged in family worship or at other times. Neither is the power exerted by the husband in all respects like that exerted by the wife. Nor is the power of the sister in all respects like the power of the brother. A pious and devoted sister will frequently exert a far mightier influence over the brother than she does over another sister. And so will a pious and godly brother exert a much stronger influence over the sister than he can over his brother in many instances. But it is only when these different members of the family are properly trained, so that they are true to God and to the constitution which God has given them, and are living in the Spirit and are walking in the Spirit, that they exert the happiest and most potent influence over each other. And not only so, but it is also true that the power wielded by all of the different members of the family, and the different worshippers in church, is of such a nature that it does not cease to operate when the assembly breaks up, but continues to act upon those who are affected by it. Of Abraham it is written, "I know him that he will command his children after him," plainly implying that the commanding power of God's presence in him and with him was such that the influence of the father would still be felt among his descendants when Abraham had passed away. And no fact is better established than the fact that parents will, under certain circumstances, stamp the impress of their most ardent and cherished purpose or desire directly upon the constitution of their children, thus determining, to a very great extent, the kind of power or influence which their children will be likely to wield through life. An instance might be given in which a daughter, when old enough to converse freely with her mother, could not be induced to speak to her father at all. The physician informed the father that it was his ill treatment of the mother before the daughter was born, causing her to refuse to speak to him, that gave the child this disposition. Of course it was a severe chastisement to the father. But this is one of the ways in which the Creator visits the iniquities of parents upon their children to the third and fourth generations, in those cases where they transgress his commands and violate the laws of their own constitution. It is on the

same principle that some persons are born anarchists and others are born drunkards and thieves and murderers, in some instances. There are women among us who have inherited a disposition which thoroughly unfits them for any position in life in which they will be required to act as teachers or guides of the young of their own sex, in consequence of the fact that they are so constituted by nature that they will educate the young out of all conformity to the will of God. The obvious purpose of the adversary of souls in tempting the people of God to neglect the enrolment of those godly women among the officers of the Church, whom God has set in the body to be teachers and guides of the young, is to induce them to place the young under the influence of those whose natural characteristics and subsequent training has thoroughly unfitted them for the work of preparing the young for their future mission in life. To prepare the young for their mission in life they must be taught to understand the true secret of their power both with God and with men. Every prayerful student of the Bible knows that the most potent influence wielded by woman in the temple of God, in the days of Eli, the prophet, of which we have any knowledge, was wielded by Hannah while engaged in inaudible prayer. And the mightiest power that was probably ever wielded by mortal man in behalf of his own country and kindred was wielded by the prophet, Nehemiah, when, acting as a cup-bearer to the king of Babylon far away from his native land, he lifted his silent ejaculatory prayer to God for the purpose of ascertaining what request the God of heaven would have him make of the king. And the only possible reason that any spiritually minded person can give why the God of heaven regards the heavenly adorning and the meek and quiet spirit of the Christian wife as above price even, and places such comparatively low estimate upon the able sermons which ministers of the gospel sometimes preach in the house of God, is because the heavenly adorning of the wife, when she is baptized by the Holy Spirit, is a far more potent instrumentality by means of which to convey the gospel of Christ to the hearts of men than able sermons possibly can be. And yet we have ministers in abundance among us, who, instead of properly expounding these portions of the word of God and teaching the members of their churches that the power actually wielded by devout and prayerful women,

while engaged in prayer and adorned with heavenly adorning, is as much greater than that wielded by the preacher in the delivery of his sermon as can well be imagined, and doing everything in their power to persuade these godly women to be as fervent and as importunate as possible while in the sanctuary, and appointing meetings in which they may exercise their preaching gifts in the divinely appointed way, elsewhere, these preachers leave many of those portions of the word of God, which were intended to guide us in our endeavor to secure the power of God, unexpounded and unapplied. And, on the other hand, they invite into their pulpits those misguided persons who are wholly disqualified for the work of preaching the gospel of the home institution in the homes of the people, and allow them to lead the members of their churches off into spiritual captivity. In ancient times when the enemy of all righteousness desired to make captives among God's people, he was obliged to stir up the kings of foreign nations and cause them to raise large armies and march them up to the city of Jerusalem and batter down the walls. These warriors found the Princes of Zion so wary that they were obliged to put out both eyes and bind them with cords, and fasten hooks into their noses, and put cords in these hooks and bind the cords around the axles of their chariots, in order to prevent them from escaping while marching them away into exile. But in our day the adversary of souls has a much easier task to perform. In many instances, he finds the princes who stand on the walls of Zion so blind to spiritual things that he has no occasion whatever to fear that they will escape. All he has to do is to send an emissary from some worldly organization to them, and insert a piece of ribbon into the buttonhole of their coat, and off they go away from the walls of Zion, out on to the plane of human expediency where very well meaning but very much misguided men and women are busily engaged, not in preaching the glorious gospel of Christ to the intemperate and the immoral and showing them how to be saved with an everlasting salvation, and how to be kept from falling through the power of God, but in keeping the gospel of Christ from them by encouraging them to make good resolutions and to rely upon these as a means by which to keep themselves from falling. A wise pastor will not array himself nor the members of his church against any of these organiza-

tions, nor will he spend his time in preaching against the absurd theories and sophistries of those would-be reformers who pervert the Scriptures in defence of their preconceived opinions. But he will make it his constant aim and unwavering purpose so to preach the gospel of Christ, and so to organize the working forces of his church under their divinely appointed leaders, and so to lead them forth to the homes of the people and the haunts of vice round about, that it will be both seen and felt that the Lord Jesus Christ organized by far the best reform organization that the world ever has seen or ever will see. Probably the very best temperance reform work that was ever done in America was begun by two Christian women in the city of Gloucester a few years ago. A man had been murdered in cold blood in a dram shop. These two women hired that room and began a series of prayer-meetings there in behalf of the intemperate. The power of God soon descended upon them. The room became too small. The meetings were carried to the City Hall. Dr. Reynolds was soon sent for. The hall was packed. The clergymen of the entire city were enlisted in the work. More than three thousand men were pledged to total abstinence, and marched to banqueting halls where they celebrated their deliverance from the bondage of alcohol. Over thirty ships sailed out of that port that year with every man on board pledged to total abstinence. What the pastors and members of churches especially need, is to realize the indispensable necessity of having the full measure of divine power in all the different assemblies which may be held for worship and in all efforts for reform, and so to conduct the services in these assemblies that both the preachers and the worshippers will conform to the conditions in accordance with which divine power is promised. God knows a great deal better than we do on what conditions he can consistently bestow this power, and having revealed the conditions, it should be our joy and delight to comply with them, whatever they are. But if pastors of churches take no special pains to ascertain what these conditions are, and make no particular effort to comply with them and simply prepare their sermons and then deliver them and leave the result with God, as they sometimes say, and the people hear the sermons and leave the result with God, as they also imagine, when, in reality, both parties leave the result with the adver-

sary of souls who stands ready to pluck away the seed of the kingdom as soon as it is sown, neither pastor nor hearer realizing that the true way to leave the result with God is to carry both the sermon and the hearers to God in prayer, and ask the Holy Spirit to follow up the impression made by the word preached by his regenerating power, it ought not to be considered strange that the power of God is not manifested in the conviction and conversion of sinners. And if those who are endowed with the largest capacity for making intercession in behalf of impenitent persons fail to pour out their souls in silent prayer while the sermon is being delivered, we ought to expect that the word preached will not profit the hearers. And until we begin to realize this fact and make it our constant aim and persistent endeavor to persuade both men and women to conform to the will of God concerning this all important matter, and make the house of God a house of prayer, and not simply a place in which to preach and listen to able sermons, it is not of any sort of use for us to try to do works of reform nor to build up churches. Sermons will necessarily be powerless for good, and hearers will be careless and indifferent, until the power of God rests upon both preacher and hearer. So far as the Scriptures have informed us, no agency has ever been more potent in securing divine power in the sanctuary than the silent ejaculatory prayers of the most pious and devoted women. And it is partly in consequence of the fact that this class of worshippers and others have not been taught to realize that their exemption from the obligation to preach in this assembly places them under increased obligation to exercise their gifts in prayer, that more silent prayer is not offered and more divine power is not manifested. Hence, in some communities people have no expectation of witnessing any manifestation of power of any sort, except what is produced by the voices of the preacher and the singing choir. In some instances there is no other power. God is not worshipped at all in any proper sense of the term. Even the instruction that is contained in the sermon is not sufficiently biblical to make it consistent for God to own and bless it. And yet people seem to wonder why God does not manifest his presence more frequently in the conviction and conversion of sinners in connection with the public worship on the Sabbath. The real wonder is, that he produces any con-

viction or conversions whatever, in many churches. God is now working just as many works of grace in connection with these services as he consistently can. He never will make his presence any more savingly manifest than he now does, until we adopt a different course of procedure than that which we are now pursuing. The same is true of those services that are conducted in our homes and in the conference rooms. God can not change the conditions on which his power is bestowed. He will not make any new revelation to us concerning this all important matter. He is willing to guide us while we study his word for the purpose of obtaining a better knowledge of these conditions. He is ready to assist us in complying with the conditions. The instant that both pastors and church members begin to study the word of God carefully and prayerfully, with the view of ascertaining precisely in what way and manner they may secure more of the power of God in both public and private worship, they will find him ready to assist them in their endeavor to know his will, and if they conform to his requirements there will be larger and larger measures of his power in these services.

HOW TO SECURE DIVINE POWER IN OUR HOMES.

It devolves upon those who gain the attention of wives and mothers mainly, to determine whether we shall have divine power in authority, acting in and through the husband and father, and divine power in subjection, acting in and through the mother, and both of these two kinds of power constantly being brought to bear directly upon the hearts of the children, and thus securing obedience and harmony in the home; or whether we shall have Satanic power acting in and through the husband and father, tyrannizing over the wife and mother, and Satanic power in rebellion against both God and man acting in and through the wife and mother, with both of these two manifestations of power constantly inciting children to rebellion against their parents and producing insubordination and strife, and preparing the children for future deeds of violence and for rebellion against the laws of the state. We can not sow the seeds of anarchy in the family without reaping the fruit in the state and nation. And we might as well look this fact in the face now as

to wait and look at it when it is too late to correct our mistake. And hence, while the writer would assist in ordaining candidates for the office of deaconess or female evangelist, just as soon, and even sooner than he would assist in ordaining candidates for the pastoral office just at the present time, for there is a vastly greater need of these gifts than there is of more pastors at present, he would be just as careful to examine the candidate, with reference to her views of faith and practice with regard to the home institution and the Church, as he would the views of a candidate for the pastoral office. No woman can preach the gospel successfully, no matter how pious and devoted she may be, who has such views of the divinely appointed relationship of the members of the two sexes as will make her instructions the means of depriving wives and mothers of a proper knowledge of the rights and privileges of the new man, by conveying to them an erroneous view of the rights of the old man. Teaching of this kind will necessarily prevent them from going to God in prayer and obtaining that measure of grace by which, alone, they can succeed in winning their husbands to Christ and in securing the conversion of their children. Hence, while no class of persons among us can be so highly useful to the cause of Christ in our homes as those deaconesses and female evangelists who are baptized by the Holy Spirit and are thoroughly qualified for their work, none can be more injurious to the cause of Christ than those who have an erroneous view of those portions of the word of God which pertain to the subject now under consideration. For while it is true that God has shown his infinite wisdom and benevolence in constituting his Son the express image and likeness of his own fatherhood, and in making him the exponent of divine power in authority in personal God form, and in constituting the Holy Spirit the exponent of divine power in subjection in personal God form, thus making it possible for him to bring himself into direct personal contact with all of his intelligent creatures, and to act upon both the intellect and the heart at the same time, he has made a similar exhibition of his wisdom and benevolence in creating the two members of the first human pair in the image and likeness of these two persons of the Trinity.

By this admirable arrangement, it becomes perfectly easy for the Supreme Being to bring himself into personal contact with

both the intellect and the heart of every son and daughter of Adam by acting upon them through the father and the mother, simply by baptizing both father and mother with the Holy Spirit. When baptized by the Holy Spirit, the father of the family necessarily brings the commanding power of the Supreme Being to bear directly upon the intellect and the will of the child, in all cases, when he gives his commands in accordance with or in the words of Christ who has constituted him the head of the family. And on the other hand, the mother, when baptized by the Holy Spirit, necessarily brings the subjecting power of the Holy Spirit in direct contact with the heart of the child, either by her own personal acts of obedience, or by her tender entreaty or persuasive plea, or, perhaps, by means of her tears and expostulations and her prayers. There should be such a state of things existing in every family that if the head of the family gives the word of command or direction, the heart of the family will respond in such a way as to make it very easy for the child to obey. And on the other hand, if the mother gives expression of her desire to have the child comply with her request at any time, though the order is given without that commanding force which is characteristic of the father, he, as head of the family, should see that the authority of the mother is not abused nor her entreaty made light of. A child that is suffered to grieve the mother, unrebuked by the father of a family, will soon be suffered by the Holy Spirit not only to grieve the father also, but to set the father's commands at defiance. And God will just as surely hold such fathers responsible for the waywardness and the final ruin of such children as he would hold the Lord Jesus Christ responsible for the ruin of the members of his church, should they go down to the chambers of death grieving the Holy Spirit, in case the Lord Jesus Christ had not given those terrible warnings with regard to the sin of grieving the Holy Spirit, which we find in the Word of God. Children should be taught that there is always danger of grieving the Spirit of God as well as their parents, when they grieve them; much more are they likely to grieve him and offend God, the Father, when they openly disobey their parents. There are those who feel just as confident that the Scriptures teach that the spirit of our first mother, Eve, was created in the image and likeness of the Holy Spirit, as that

Adam was created in the image and likeness of the Son of God. Spiritual motherhood is certainly as truly personalized in the Holy Ghost as spiritual fatherhood is personalized in the Son of God, otherwise the redeemed would not all be born of the Spirit. It is thought by some that the design of the Creator in constituting woman in this way was to enable the daughters of Eve, in coming generations, to share with the Holy Spirit as largely as possible in the exercise of that intercessory power which is characteristic of the Holy Spirit, who, we are told, makes intercession for us in groanings which cannot be uttered. Be this as it may, the Almighty Father has shown his appreciation of the work of the Spirit by requiring Christ himself to be baptized by the Spirit, before entering upon his mission as the great High Priest. And he has shown his appreciation of the intercessory power of woman in his Church by designating the conduct which she is to maintain in the Church. He certainly has never intended that her capacious heart shall be filled with hatred, or even with indifference, either towards God or man. Nor has he ever intended that man shall have his heart so filled with hatred towards woman as to cause him to use his wisdom and intelligence in bringing his superior muscular power to bear in crushing and enslaving woman. Man was so constituted that life manifests itself most potently in and through his judgment and reasoning powers, in order that he may cherish and protect woman and not abuse her. And while all may not be able to see alike in all points concerning the doctrine of the Trinity or of the human constitution, all who desire to do so can see that God has a perfect right to use that wealth of spiritual affection which belongs to woman when baptized by the Holy Spirit in such a way as to make the deepest and most lasting impressions which can be made on the hearts of men, both in the family and in the Church, so causing the unbelieving husband to be sanctified by the wife. And God also has a sovereign right to use the manly power of man in such a way as to make just as deep and as lasting impression as possible upon the heart of woman, so causing the unbelieving wife to be sanctified by the husband. And he has also a right to use the gifts and graces of both father and mother in such a way as to make the deepest and most lasting impressions upon their children. It is only an act of gratitude towards God when either man or woman lays himself or

herself down upon God's altar a willing sacrifice, to be used by him in whatever way he sees fit to employ the offering, for the present and future good of the other party. And if God cannot have his sovereign rights respected and his purposes of mercy complied with by both men and women, in the family and in the Church, but one course is left to him, and that is to withdraw his Holy Spirit from them and allow things to take their natural course in whatever direction the adversary of souls may lead or suggest. Parental desire then gives place to passion and lust. A sanctified fatherhood and a sanctified motherhood disappear throughout the land. State nurseries for the rearing of illegitimate children will become a necessity, the same as they were in France in the days of the first Napoleon. The public worship of Almighty God will cease to be observed. The services of the Lord's house will become rhetorical and musical entertainments. The state and national government will pass out of the hands of the best men in the nation, into the hands of the worst men and the most violent women. Bread riots and insurrections will be frequent and inevitable, for the simple reason that the industries of the nation will not be sufficient to afford supplies adequate to the demands made by the multitudes who will be wholly given up to the gratification of their animal passions and depraved appetites. Insurrection will follow insurrection, and revolution will follow revolution in such rapid succession that the land will be drenched with blood and swept as with the broom of destruction, until the accumulated resources of past generations will be wasted and destroyed. And the people will have neither rights nor privileges. Nor will they have either homes or churches in which to enjoy these. And when some lover of American liberties shall ask some great military conqueror the question which was asked of Napoleon of France, "What does America need in order to make her the happiest and most prosperous nation in the world?" the answer will be "Mothers."

The writer is no idle day-dreamer. Nor is he a croaking alarmist. There are undoubtedly as prosperous churches and as happy Christian homes in New England and in other parts of America as there ever were, and probably more of them than at any previous period. The instruction that is now given by godly mothers in the maternal meetings connected with some of

the more prosperous churches, from time to time, is probably doing more for the peace and prosperity of the homes of the members of these churches than all the sermons preached in the pulpit from year to year. And yet it may be safely questioned whether the pastors of these churches realize how very inadequate this instruction is, or how small is the percentage of candidates for baptism, reported from the families of these parishes, in comparison with the candidates which might be reported for prisons and jails, and reform schools, and poor-houses, and brothels and saloons, and insane asylums. Much less do these pastors and church members realize how much larger is the quota of candidates for these various places, which are annually sent from the communities round about the feeble churches in many communities, than the number reported for baptism by the pastors of these churches. It is only a short time since the writer stood at the corner of a Baptist meeting-house near a parsonage, both of which were then unoccupied, and saw a prominent citizen of that town point his finger over to the schoolhouse near by, and heard him say that one-fourth part of all the children who attend that school are illegitimate. It is less than forty years since fifty persons were added to that church by baptism in a single year. Said the deacon of a Baptist church when referring to a large manufacturing town where many young women are employed, "It is not an uncommon occurrence for a certain class of those operatives, on being paid off, to call for a hack and send for a paramour and drive off to a hotel in the adjacent town and spend the night there. Many of the boarding-houses in these manufacturing towns are but little better than haunts of vice, in consequence of the utter absence of all religious services or religious literature of any kind, and the presence of a superabundance of irreligious literature. There might have been, and there would have been, Christian boarding-houses in many of these towns if Christians had been half awake during the past twenty-five years. But the truth is, the love of gain and the love of sensual pursuits and pleasures of various kinds has well nigh killed out the love of home in many instances, and blinded the eyes of Christians to such an extent that even they do not half appreciate the real worth of home. And the Christians of this generation are never going to half appreciate the worth of

their homes until some means are employed to make them appreciate them, different from the means now in use.

It is said that a group of abandoned and very wicked men were talking about their wives one night while drinking and carousing at a very late hour. One of them offered to bet a very liberal sum of money that he could go home at a very late hour in the night and call his wife up out of her bed and ask her to get him a supper for himself and his companions, and she would go and do it without making a single word of complaint. The wager was laid, and the entire group set out for that man's dwelling. It was a very late hour when they arrived there. They all went in and were seated. The man called his wife up and told her what he wanted her to do. She got up immediately and without one word of complaint, and proceeded at once to get them a supper, which far exceeded their most sanguine expectations, both in its quality and in the elaborateness of its preparation. When the feast had been disposed of one of those men took the liberty to ask the good woman how it was that she was enabled to yield such cheerful submission to the request of her husband. "Well," said she, "I have made up my mind that all the enjoyment which my husband will be likely to have will be in this world. He does not seem to be at all inclined to become a Christian, though God knows how earnestly I have prayed that he might become one. And since it costs me but little effort to minister to his wants, I feel determined that I will do everything that I can do to make him happy while he lives, whenever I can gratify him without violating my obligations to God. If I continue to be patient and forbearing, it is quite possible that he may yet be able to see that there is a divine reality in the religion which I profess, and so be led to glorify my Father who is in heaven." That woman had the satisfaction soon after, not only of seeing her husband feasting at the table which the gospel of Christ has spread for poor perishing sinners, but she also saw the entire group feasting with him at the gospel feast. In the town of Newburyport, some years ago in time of religious awakening, there was a carpenter who was violently opposed to religion, though his wife was a very worthy and consistent member of the church, and took great pleasure in attending the meetings. He became so enraged in consequence of the fact that she would attend the meetings, that he

actually threatened to go to the meeting-house with a horse-whip and whip her home if she went there again. She attended to her household duties very faithfully the next day as usual, so as to give him no just ground for complaint, and when evening came, went to meeting as usual. He heard of it and, true to his word, seized his horse-whip and went down to the meeting-house, called her out and said, "Did not I tell you that if you went to this meeting again I would horse-whip you home? Now start yourself home and be quick about it, too." She said nothing but set out on her walk homeward as meekly as if nothing had happened, praying in the meantime that God would have mercy on her poor husband, whom she felt was really nearer to perdition than she had ever seen him before, for he was in a terrible rage, and very likely would have struck her with his whip if she had opposed him in any way. She walked on and he went after, cracking his whip at a fearful rate, but did not dare to strike her, after all. When he got home she said nothing, but attended to her duties as usual, and retired to rest. Late in the night he woke her up and asked her to pray for him. He felt that he was too guilty to pray for himself. The next evening he was glad enough to go to church with her, and when there, arose in the meeting with great brokenness of heart and acknowledged his transgression, begged the people of God to pray for him, and soon found peace in believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Every spiritually minded person can see that the very worst possible advice that could have been given to those two wives, under such circumstances, would have been to have advised them to stand up for their rights and refuse to comply with such unreasonable requests. And the worst possible training they could have had would have been such training as they would have received from that class of teachers who think they can be very good Christians and still usurp authority over men. If these two women had stood up for the rights of the old man rather than for the rights of the new man, they would have forfeited the good will of their heavenly Father, and would have been obliged to put up with the abusive treatment of those brutal husbands all the rest of their days. And they might have gone to the bar of God at last and found the blood of the souls of their husbands on the skirts of their garments in consequence of their unbelief and their unwillingness to comply

with that command which requires them to love their husbands as Christ loved them. But by trusting themselves and their rights and the eternal well-being of their husbands in God's hands, and pouring out their souls to God in prayer, they not only secured the conversion of their husbands, but they found that God was both able and willing to not only stand up for their rights, but to cause their husbands to be so renewed in the spirit of their minds that they would stand up for their rights for them and glory in them, and finally reign with them in glory. There are hundreds and even thousands of women in different parts of the country who are in the same condition that these two wives were in, some of whom have been thoroughly unfitted for a proper performance of the very duties which God in his sovereign mercy is trying to induce them to perform, in consequence of the pernicious influences which have been exerted upon them by that class of lecturers who roam about like wandering stars teaching women how to right the wrongs of woman, by inflicting still greater wrongs upon men. This class of reformers are never so far from their proper orbit as when nearest to their desired orbit, and are never so much at home as when farthest from home, sowing the seeds of discord in other people's homes. Those wives and mothers who are abused and ill treated by their brutal husbands, and have been misled by those misguided reformers, need to be carefully sought out and prayerfully instructed and made to realize that God is no respecter of persons, but is just as willing to hear their prayers as the prayers of others. They ought also to be made to see how it is and why it is that our heavenly Father places so high an estimate upon the heavenly adorning of the renewed heart of the Christian wife, and why he wishes her to put on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, and how absolutely certain it is that he will hear prayer, if the wife perseveres in her purpose to secure the salvation of her husband; and what an exalted privilege it is to resort to the house of God in company with other devout women and there lift up her silent ejaculatory prayers while the sermon is being preached, and secure both the presence of the Holy Spirit and also the presence of those angels who are sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, by their earnest and persistent importunities in the

presence of the Head of the Church, while public worship is being conducted. These women ought also to be taught that it is an unspeakable privilege for them to preach the same precious gospel which is preached by the pastor in the church, in their own homes and in those assemblies which are called together for the express purpose of enabling them to exercise their gifts, and to assist them in the glorious work of building up beautiful Christian homes while their pastors are building up churches. And hence, the question whether the members of the churches shall be taught to carefully look out those pious and devoted women, whom God has set in the body as has pleased him, for the purpose of teaching these wives and mothers what their duties are and how to perform them in such a manner as to secure the conversion of their husbands and their children, and send these divinely appointed teachers forth to the homes and haunts of the people to do the work which the Head of the Church has assigned to them, or whether we shall expose our wives and daughters to the many unhallowed and injurious influences which are now being brought to bear upon them by those misguided persons who glide into the pulpit and on to the public platform like warships loaded with dynamite, and there pour out their scorching and withering utterances, is a question of vital importance, not only to our homes and churches, but to the state and nation as well.

A wise pastor of a Church will be very careful not to array himself nor the members of his Church against that class of would-be reformers, nor against any one of them any reform organizations which now surround so many feeble churches, notwithstanding the fact that he sees plainly enough, that the piety and talent and money that is now drawn away for the support of these various organizations from the Church over which he is pastor places the Church in very much the same condition that a large manufacturing establishment would be, if the owner was to allow a half a dozen or more manufacturers to draw water from his mill-dam, and make free use of the operatives of his manufactory. The success of a gardener does not depend mainly on his ability and skill in hoeing up weeds, but on his tact and perseverance in planting and watering good seed. A gardener may hoe weeds all summer and still have only weeds

for his harvest. A preacher of the gospel may preach against error all his life time and still have no sheaves for the heavenly garner. Hence, a wise pastor will not only make it his constant aim and unwavering purpose to preach the gospel of Christ *up*, instead of preaching error *down*, in his pulpit, but he will do this so tenderly and so lovingly and so meltingly that people cannot help coming to hear the word, even if they do not like to hear the man. And not only so, a wise pastor will teach the members of his church how so to organize themselves under their divinely appointed leaders that he can easily lead them forth to the homes and haunts of the people and let them preach the same precious gospel with such tender, loving, melting tones of voice that they will bring its life-giving power into direct contact with the hearts of sinners of all classes, who dwell round about the Church. In this way he will convince the people that the Church over which he presides is a more potent, and a purer and better and far more efficient reform organization than any other organization existing in the community. It may cost some considerable effort to do this. But work of this kind can be done, and has been done, in many communities. And it is a work that must be done, and will be done, if the pastor will only lay himself resolutely upon God's altar, and make the Lord Jesus Christ his pattern and exemplar. Christ himself was the very best kind of moral reform society to the woman at the well. Pastors of churches who have not Scriptural knowledge enough, nor faith and zeal enough to enable the members of their churches to do more and better reform work and regenerating work than any worldly organization, ought to keep silent about worldly organizations. We might just as well try to dam up the waters of Niagara River with the strands of a spider's web, and stay the mighty current of water which is now pouring over the falls into the chasm below, as to try to bind up the turbulent forces of passion and lust which now boil and surge through the hearts of drunkards and gamblers and adulterers, by means of legal enactments and by the decisions of the courts of justice, or by good resolutions and pledges and badges. What we need is an agency which will enable the wives of these wicked men to know and appreciate the power and saving efficacy of that free grace which the Father of all mercies, and

the God of all grace has provided for the redemption of these men. And we have this agency in those consecrated women who have not only known this grace for years, but who have so rich and so varied an experience of its saving power that they have themselves become living exponents of this grace, and are able to bring it in contact with the hearts of others.

HOW TO DO EVANGELISTIC WORK AMONG FEEBLE CHURCHES.

IV.

There are many churches in different parts of the country whose members are assisted in the support of pastors by the funds of the Convention, who do not need this kind of assistance one-half so much as they need the services of pious and devoted women who know, by long experience and faithful service in building up Christian homes, how to teach them by example and by precept to show piety first at home. Hence, if the writer had this class of churches in charge, he would neither assist them to a pastor, nor suffer the missionary or evangelist of the Convention to labor among them, until after the preparatory work in the homes is done by household preachers, either male or female.

There were many synagogues in Israel at the time that Christ sent His apostles forth to preach the gospel. But he sent them not to the synagogues but to the homes of the people, and bade them tarry in the house of whatever worthy person made them welcome, until their work was done in that and in neighboring houses in every community where they labored. He would sooner have allowed every synagogue in the land to stand idle and rot down than allow the homes of the people to remain unchristianized, and the haunts of wretchedness to be uncleansed by the saving power of the gospel. The writer would do the same thing with many of the meeting-houses, where a powerless gospel is now being preached to a mere handful of stony ground hearers, with the aid of the funds of the Convention, by pastors who need nothing so much as the prayers of Christians in their closets and at their family altars and in church, in order to cause the Word preached to have free course and be glorified in the salvation of precious souls. And one of the surest ways by which to prevent some of these meeting-houses from rotting down would be to send these godly mothers in Israel, who pray night and day, directly to the homes

of the members of the Church, and persuade them to rebuild the family altar, and enter into their closets and pour out their souls in prayer for husbands and children, and go forth to the homes of the irreligious and talk and pray with them, and arouse them from their lethargy, and persuade them to seek God and secure the salvation of their own souls and the souls of their kindred. In some communities the worshippers seem to have the semblance of spiritual power so long as they are in the sanctuary listening to the sermon, but no power at all while in their homes or when engaged in the pursuit of business or of pleasure. The Head of the Church requires us to teach the disciples to observe all of his commands everywhere. Some of these commands, though of vital importance to the home institution, can never be so well taught by others as by those whom God has raised up and qualified for the work of preaching the gospel in the homes of the people, and in home assemblies. And if the members of any enfeebled or declining church cannot be aroused from their lethargy, and be made to see and feel their need of the gospel right in their homes, and be induced to put forth the most untiring efforts to persuade their own kindred to come to Christ and be saved by such pious and devoted Christian women as God has raised up for this work, whose tender entreaties and fervent prayers are so well adapted to the work of moving the hearts of the members of the family at their own fireside, it is not of any sort of use to send pastors to them to preach to the empty pews of the meeting-house. And it is not worth the while to waste the Convention's funds in this way. Hence, the writer would send to this class of churches, not pastors nor male evangelists, but deaconesses and female evangelists, or a deacon and deaconess like Aquila and Priscilla, in order that, being persons of great faith and spiritual power and fully agreed concerning the things which they would ask of God, we might be sure that their request would be granted by our heavenly Father who hears in secret and rewards openly. A business man would become a laughing stock who should send one overseer after another to superintend a manufacturing establishment, and let him read off a discourse in the presence of the operatives once in the week, pointing out the proper methods of doing the business of that establishment, while the operatives trot back and forth to listen to the discourse, and all parties suffer the

machinery to remain unused and out of order, and the mill power to run to waste for want of a proper dam and efficient workmen to show the operatives how to build the dam, and how to put the machinery in order, and how to bring the raw material in contact with the machinery. And as a simple matter of fact, we are, and have been, a laughing stock both in the eyes of men and angels in consequence of our unreasonable and unscriptural method of doing evangelistic work in many communities. People look with profound contempt upon the means of grace in many towns, simply because the affairs of the Church are so conducted that they cannot look upon the means of grace in any other way, the methods in use are so contemptible. By gaining admission to some one household and securing permission to hold meetings for prayer and conference, in behalf of the inmates of the dwelling and of other dwellings round about, in the evenings, and going from house to house talking and praying with wives and mothers, and persuading them to unite in prayer for the descent of the Holy Spirit on husbands and children, the power of God will soon be manifest in producing deep contrition in the hearts of wives and mothers in the first place, in consequence of their neglect of duty. Confessions will follow, and earnest, importunate prayers will soon be offered for husbands and children, such as have not been offered in these dwellings for years. There will then be deep convictions among husbands and children, and very soon conversions will follow, and wives and mothers will be filled with the joy of the Holy Ghost on account of these conversions. The converts must be carefully instructed in the first principles of the gospel of Christ and taught first of all how to show piety at home; the husband and father being made to understand precisely what is meant by being head of the family *as* Christ is head of the Church, and the wife being made to understand what it is to be subject to the husband *as* the Church is subject to Christ. If there are children among the converts, these must be taught, at the very outset, what their duties towards their parents and towards each other and towards the children of irreligious families are, not simply as children, but as members of the "house church," or Christian family; the object being, to teach all of the converted members of the family how to maintain a consistent walk and conversation in the family, and how to

secure the conversion of the unconverted members of the family, and how to win converts from among the members of other families living round about. And for the better accomplishment of these objects, Christian Home Circles should be formed, whose members shall meet from house to house throughout the neighborhood for prayer and conference, and for preaching and for Bible study from evening to evening, or week to week, as the exigencies of the case may require. Special pains should be taken so to form these circles and so to conduct the meetings and so to perform all other duties that the minds of the worshippers will not be diverted from the work of saving souls, for the present, not only for the sake of attending to any worldly duty, however important in itself considered, if found to be conflicting with the work now in hand, but pains should be taken to prevent the attention from being diverted by even religious duties, however important in themselves considered, except as they have a bearing on the work of saving souls. It would be deemed an unpardonable offence by a farmer, when in the midst of the hay season, if his help should attend to wood chopping. The master of a fishing vessel would chastise his men if they proceeded to repair the sails of the ship while schools of fish were all about the vessel waiting for a proper use of hook and line. A physician would order a nurse out of doors who should neglect a sick patient in order to attend to bread making. But offences of this kind, when committed by these different classes of persons, are far less culpable than the offences of Christians are who do not attend to the spiritual wants of immortal souls in times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, but who do attend to almost all other wants but these. The reason why Philip, the evangelist, was sent off in the desert way was because the Spirit of God was doing his work in the heart of the eunuch, and there must needs be some one there to expound the prophet Isaiah to him lest he be lost. And the reason why he ran in order to get up into that chariot was because there was a possibility of having that portion of Scripture perverted by the adversary of souls, and the eunuch be lost, in consequence of having the seed snatched away from the heart by the enemy of all righteousness, at the time it was about to take root.

IMPRESSIONS MADE BY THE HOLY SPIRIT TO BE
FOLLOWED UP.

When the Spirit of God is poured out in any community for the purpose of reviving his work in the hearts of Christians, he always begins by making deep impressions on the minds of both saints and sinners. And hence, great care should be used by religious teachers to prevent both young converts and others from mistaking those impressions which the adversary of souls may make on their minds for those which the Holy Spirit makes. The impressions which are made by the Holy Spirit are always in harmony with the things taught by Christ while he was in the flesh. 1 John 4:1. And in order that young converts may be kept from copying the example of older Christians who have brought on decline and enfeebled the Church, they should be taught at the very outset how to try the spirits by which their minds are wrought upon, and to act as they are moved by the Holy Spirit and not as the example which older Christians set before them might, in some cases, cause them to act. If the woman at Jacob's well had coolly lowered her water pot and drawn up the water that she came to the well for, and started off home with it in a moderate way, and calmly considered the question whether she would take pains to inform the inmates of her dwelling with regard to her newly found hope and the Messiah who had been the means of awakening this hope in her, or not, it is altogether probable that the adversary of souls would have gotten the advantage of her, and would have caused her to quench the Spirit and would have filled the hearts of the inmates of her house with the grossest forms of unbelief, and prevented the work of grace which was the result of her prompt action. And she would have become, in a measure, responsible for the loss of those many souls who believed on Christ through her word. Hence, if religious teachers would succeed in doing evangelistic work among feeble churches, they must see that young converts do not resist the promptings of the Holy Spirit by delay or by following the inclinations of their own hearts, or by copying the example of older Christians who may be still pursuing those very courses of action which have enfeebled the Church. Nothing short of the most cheerful and willing and very prompt obedience, on the

part of those who are rejoicing in the rich and heavenly experience of their newly found hope, will move the hearts of the impenitent with sufficient power to cause them to act and carry the work of revival successfully forward.

A FRESH EXPERIENCE ON THE PART OF OLDER CHRISTIANS REQUIRED.

Great pains must also be taken so to enlighten older Christians as to enable them to see the absolute necessity of a fresh experience of the grace of God in their own hearts, in order that they may become valuable helpers in revival work, rather than hinderers and stumbling blocks in the way of the anxious and the careless and indifferent. Older Christians should have such a fresh and so deep and so pervasive an experience of the grace of God, as will prevent them from relapsing into those courses of life which brought on the declension from which they are being revived. And in order that they may obtain such an experience as this, they must be made to understand the process by which it is to be obtained. In Hosea 14:7, the prophet is led by the Holy Spirit to say, "Ye shall revive as the corn and grow as the vine." Every person who is at all familiar with the process by which corn is revived in time of drought, or the way in which the vine grows, is aware of the fact that the fruit-bearing principle is constantly moving forward and upward into the new wood. And it is only when the fruit-bearing principle is so abundant and so active in its course as to produce a surplus above what is needed for the sustenance and growth of the old wood, and the kernels of corn already formed on the cob of the ear, that fruit is produced in the new wood of the grape and in those portions of the corn cob where the kernels are not yet formed. One might search all the vineyards of the world over, without finding so many as one berry on the old last year's wood of any grapevine. And if we take an ear of corn in the summer time when a drought has come on, and pluck it from the stalk and pull down the husks a little ways, we shall find quite a space at the end of the cob where there is not a kernel of corn to be found. And there never will be a kernel there, no matter how rich may be the soil nor how well the ground may be hoed, unless the showers or dew or some artificial means be

used to give moisture, so that the sap that is in the stalk will quicken its pace and propel the fruit-bearing principle towards the end of the cob. If the showers and the dews are sufficiently abundant, and the ground is rich and well hoed, the corn will fill out to the very end of the cob. But these showers must come at the right time, otherwise the very channels through which the fruit-bearing principle advances will shrivel and contract so that the corn will never fill out. And the farmer will have those short, unsightly ears which are sometimes called nubbins. The same is true of the vine. It is only when the sap of the vine is abundant and active enough to propel the fruit-bearing principle forward into the new wood, that grapes are formed. If there are many branches, and more or less of these are dead, and the soil is poor, there will not only be no fruit, but the vine will begin to die. The same is true of apple trees and pear trees and other kinds of fruit trees. And it was for this reason that the Saviour speaks of pruning the vine that it may bear more fruit. Almost any vine can be made to bear more and larger fruit, by simply cutting off a considerable portion of the branches and causing the sap to carry the fruit-bearing principle into the remaining branches. And with these facts before us, it is very easy to see why both the corn and the vine must have a present, as well as a past experience of the benefits which accrue from the showers and the dews of heaven. The showers and the dews and the sunshine of the past are wholly inadequate to the purpose of keeping the corn and the vine alive, much less are they adequate to the work of producing fruit in time of drought.

The same is true of Christians. A fruit tree will soon begin to die both at the root and in its branches, unless the soil is properly enriched and the showers and dews descend upon its leaves in the proper season. We often find trees in our orchards where little or no fruit is found, and what little fruit there is has such an acid flavor it is fit only for the cider mill and the vinegar factory. If we take a spade and dig down into the soil a little ways, we find that the greater portion of the rootlets are already dead in consequence of the fact that the fatness of the soil has been exhausted, and the remaining rootlets have taken up so much acid and subacid from the exhausted soil, and are able to take up so little of nutritious fruit-bearing material that no

fruit can be produced. In some instances the trees are literally starved to death by feeding upon the nourishment of the past until it is all gone from the soil. In other cases the rootlets have carried the acids and subacids of the subsoil to the very tops of the trees, and have caused the limbs to die. There is one way, and only one, by means of which the farmer can reclaim such trees. He can cut a trench all around these trees, two or three feet deep, about six feet from the trunk of the tree, and cut roots and rootlets all off and throw them out, and throw out the acid subsoil also and then fill in with rich compost. The trees will then begin to throw out new rootlets which will strike down into this choice fertilizing material and gather up the fruit-bearing principle. He has then only to cut off the dead branches of the tree and it will soon produce new branches which will bear bushels of luscious fruit.

There are many Christians in feeble churches who are in very much the same condition that those dying fruit trees are in. They have not only used up all the fertilizing material there is in the past experience, but they have given themselves up to such habits of murmuring and complaining with regard to God's method of dealing with them, while being subjected to the trials and hardships of life, and while eagerly pursuing the pleasures of this world, that they have unconsciously fallen into the habit of striking their roots down into the exhausted soil that now surrounds them, and are taking up into their spiritual constitution the acids and the subacids in such large measure that they are fairly dying both at the root and at the top. And what is more unfortunate for them than everything else, perhaps, is the fact that the men who are sent from the theological schools and other places to preach to them, instead of realizing the fact that their duty is to go forth to these feeble churches like physicians who know both how to keep themselves in good health, and how to obtain a true diagnosis of the disease with which the patient is afflicted, and how to select and apply the proper remedy, and how to nurse the patient properly so as to bring him back to health,—the persons who are sent to minister to these churches frequently go among them like patients from a hospital, who themselves are already sick with the same disease with which the patients whom they visit are afflicted, or who, perhaps, are just coming down with some kindred ailment.

The consequences are, our ministerial bureaus and theological schools are in danger of gradually being converted into institutions which the adversary of souls will employ for the purpose of spreading spiritual diseases, instead of curing these diseases. There are preachers of the gospel who are only a little past their prime, who have so fallen into the habit of meditating upon the trials and hardships which are incidental to a minister's lot in life, and brooding over the short-comings of the members of the churches which they have been called to serve, that they can scarcely spend a Sabbath in any community without having this remembrance of the sufferings and trials of some former parish brought fresh to mind, by the persons who entertain them, when speaking of the faults or foibles of the members of the church with which they are connected. The consequences are the sermons of these preachers unconsciously acquire a flavor which is very nearly like the flavor of the fruit which grows on those trees where the roots are constantly taking up so much acid and subacid that the farmer feels obliged to commit the entire product of the tree to the cider mill and the vinegar factory. What these preachers need, and about all they need, is simply a fresh experience of the superabounding love of God in their hearts, causing them to look upon the heavenly and heavenward side of their high calling in Christ Jesus. They would then commit those sermons which are so full of the acids and the subacids to the flames. And having gone first to the great physician for personal healing they might go among these little struggling interests, dealing out to every man his portion of the bread of life in due season, and see signs of returning spiritual health on all sides of them, and, instead of finding themselves laid upon the shelf right in the very prime of ministerial life, they would still be bringing forth fruit even in old age.

A GRAVE MISTAKE OF THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS.

It is precisely at this point that some of the young men who are now studying for the ministry in the theological schools are making the gravest and most fatal of all possible mistakes which students preparing for the ministry can make, viz.: the mistake of supposing that, if a man only has a call to the work of the ministry and a thorough intellectual training, so that he can

prepare and deliver very able and highly instructive sermons, he certainly will be able to succeed. It has been the lot of the writer, in several instances, to take charge of churches which were served for a few years by very able, scholarly men, who commenced their pastorate under favorable circumstances and with an ample salary, but who left those parishes not only deeply in debt themselves, but they left the Church itself utterly bankrupt, both spiritually and materially. And yet these pastors were able to preach as classical sermons as the pastors of churches of other denominations around them, and, in some cases, these pastors preached abler sermons than the pastors of other denominations. The unfortunate feature in their ministerial life was not their inability to study, or to think, or write, or speak with oratorical power. They could do all these things, but they lacked present personal experience of the truths which they preached, and hence preached a powerless gospel even when the gospel was preached by them, and for want of an intensely earnest and pervasive and truly heavenly experience of the truths which they tried to present to the people, but which they did not and could not convey to the hearts of the people simply for want of this experience, their ministry in these parishes became an utter failure. We sometimes hear people say of such men that they mistook their calling. But this is not the case. Their calling mistook them for earnest, devoted, self-sacrificing men, who realized the importance of renewedly consecrating themselves to the work to which they were called. These men tried hard to adapt themselves to the fields in which they labored, and they toiled hard for the purpose of meeting the demands which the members of the churches made upon them. But they knew little or nothing about that kind of experience which the most successful ministers have, who, conscious of their inability to adapt themselves or their sermons to the real wants of the people, and fully aware that it is a sin for them to be all the time trying to please the people, place themselves completely in the hands of the Holy Spirit and rely upon him to adapt both them and their sermons to the actual wants of those to whom they preach. There are ministers who heartily appreciate the difference between currying favor with all the people and being so devoted to the service of God and the spiritual welfare of the people that God brings them into

the favor of all. A prominent member of a church on being recently asked, "What kind of a minister do your people want?" replied by saying, "I can tell you what we don't want. We don't want a man who will come among us and prepare able sermons and shoot them over our heads." It matters not how good a Christian a minister of the gospel may be, nor how able sermons he may prepare, nor how eloquent he may be in the delivery of these sermons, if he has not a present living experience of the power of the truths contained in these sermons, such as the Holy Spirit alone can give him, he will always appear to the hearers to be a man who shoots his sermons over their heads. And the question whether a man's ministerial life is a success or a failure, and whether he will be the means of reducing several flourishing churches to that degree of feebleness which will cause them to apply to the Convention for aid, or whether he will be the means of taking several churches whose feebleness is such that they are hardly deemed worthy of the aid of the Convention and will bring these into a condition of prosperity, does not depend mainly upon his talent, nor upon scholarship, nor upon his rhetorical power, but it does depend upon his determination to so consecrate himself to God and to the work in which he is engaged as to obtain a rich and heavenly and thoroughly heartfelt experience of the truths which he preaches, and upon his reliance upon the Holy Spirit to enable him to select those truths, and those only, which the Holy Spirit desires to have him preach from time to time in any given field. No man who has not acquired the habit of committing both himself and his ministerial work into the hands of the Holy Spirit, with an unwavering purpose to be led by the Holy Spirit and to act according to the promptings of the Spirit, is in any proper sense prepared for the work of the ministry. And it is because some of our young men who are studying for the ministry are not taught to realize this fact that they fail, and fail so disastrously, when they become pastors. It is the misfortune of some of these young men to come to the seminary from churches where public worship is conducted in such a way that the members of the churches have come to regard the sermon as everything, and prayer nothing, or next to nothing. And hence, from the habit of listening to scientific lectures in college, delivered in a scientific or scholarly way, they fall into the

habit of treating the lectures delivered in the theological school in the same way. The consequences are they unconsciously allow the process of education to be so conducted that they are, in reality, educated out of the work of the ministry into the work of the philosopher and the scientific lecturer; and hence become an incubus resting heavily upon the churches which they serve, rather than a power building them up. This class of men frequently will not settle at all unless a liberal material support is offered. And when they do settle, the members of the Church find their financial ability taxed beyond all endurance, in consequence of the fact that the people who would become willing supporters of the means of grace are fairly frozen away from the house of God by ponderous icy sermons that are preached, and by the frigid prayers and cheerless exhortations that are given in the conference-room. It is not long since a spiritually minded person remarked that she would sooner sit in a refrigerator an hour than in the conference-room of the Church whose pastor was educated in the manner to which the attention of the reader is here called. If these young men could be made to realize the fact that the theological teacher, though more highly educated perhaps than the college professor, is far enough from being simply a scientific lecturer, and would accustom themselves to the habit of looking upon him as a teacher whom the Head of the Church has set over them in the gospel, for the purpose of leading them to the very hidden springs of the fountain of living waters, and to show them how to quench their own thirst first of all, and not how to simply cram their intellects or how to sharpen their wits; if they could also be made to realize that the lecture-room should be made the most hallowed and truly heavenly of all places of resort which they frequent, by reason of their prayers for the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the professor and upon themselves during the time that immediately precedes the delivery of the lecture, so that they may be able to feel that they are sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, while in the lecture-room; and if, while there, they would ask those questions, and those only, which have a thoroughly practical bearing on their work as preachers of the gospel, and on obtaining the best knowledge that they can obtain by means of these hallowed and refreshing interviews; if these young men would show their

appreciation of the privileges thus enjoyed, by repairing to their rooms and bowing their knees in prayer to God and asking him to sanctify the lesson learned, even before they take off their hats or attend to any other duty, they would soon acquire an experience of gospel truths which would be worth vastly more to them than the intellectual discipline acquired. They would also keep their intellectual powers within proper control and under divine guidance. And when about to go forth to preach the gospel from time to time, if they would just bear in mind the fact that the spiritual preparation which they are in duty bound to make is vastly more important than the intellectual preparation, and that the very ablest sermon they can prepare will be utterly useless, and worse than useless, if unaccompanied by the power of God, no matter how well it may be delivered, while the poorest sermon, if it be the best which they are able to prepare, may prove to be as effective an implement in slaying stout hearted sinners as Samson's jawbone of the ass was in slaying the Philistines, when wielded by the power of God—there would be great hope of the success of these men.

It should be an established usage in all theological schools for those who are going forth to preach the gospel on the Sabbath, to take sufficient time for special prayer for accompanying grace and power, to ensure ample spiritual preparation. And sooner than neglect this, the preacher should be encouraged to neglect all other preparation. Even though it be a shame for a man who is called of God to preach the gospel to neglect the proper use of his intellectual powers while preparing his sermon when about to go forth to deliver God's message, it is not half so great a crime to do this as it is to insult the God of heaven by going forth on so important a mission without even bending the knee in his presence, or asking his Spirit to go with him and assist him. Hence, if a man is to preach the gospel at all on the Lord's day, after having spent the week largely in the exercise of his intellectual powers, he should take time enough for secret prayer and self-examination and renewed consecration to be sure that the power of God is resting mightily upon him. Where this custom is in vogue in preparatory schools, we often see a change for the better in many of the churches where students preach. And instead of coming back

to the seminary from week to week, bringing information with regard to this and that spiritual malady among the churches, and talking the infection round from room to room, to the glory of the adversary of souls, the students obtain a knowledge of the healing of spiritual diseases among the churches, which, when carried from room to room, greatly redounds to the glory of God.

The writer knows of instances where a preacher of the gospel on going into a sanctuary where the audience was prayerless and listless on the first Sabbath, by making suitable spiritual preparation and asking the spiritually minded to meet him for special prayer in the pastor's room fifteen minutes before the service began, on the second Sabbath had the pleasure of seeing anxious souls rise for prayers in the evening, notwithstanding the fact that the spiritual atmosphere of the prayer-meeting on the first Sabbath, was so cold that one might about as well have sat in a refrigerator during an hour as to have been in the conference-room. The reason why the woman who was converted at Jacob's well was sent by the Holy Spirit in such hot haste, without her water pot, back to her home to preach the gospel to the different members of the family, was because she had such a remarkably rich and refreshing experience to tell. Hence, she succeeded in her ministry most admirably, though nine persons out of every ten among those whom Christ had been teaching, and before whom he had been exemplifying the truths of the gospel for some time, would have failed utterly, if they had gone to that same dwelling and tried to preach Christ to the inmates. Hence, it becomes those who are engaged in doing evangelistic work among feeble churches, not only to set this precious truth before the people in its true light, but they should themselves be living exemplifications of this truth. It is far easier to teach young converts what few truths they need to learn, in order to enable them to lead different classes of sinners to Christ and secure their salvation, than it is to teach older members of the Church how to obtain that fresh experience of gospel truth which is indispensable to their success. About the only reason why some people do not wish to hear a certain class of ministers preach, after they have become fifty or sixty years of age, is because they unconsciously have acquired the habit of putting so much material into their sermons that is not

gospel truth, if indeed it is truth at all, and they deliver these sermons with such an utter absence of present gospel experience of the truth that they convey no good news from heaven to the hearts of their hearers. And hence the utter impossibility of making this class of ministers useful among the churches. Instead of curing spiritual diseases among the brethren and staying the work of decline, they will spread infection all around them and produce still farther decline. The same is true of a certain class of laymen. There are churches in abundance where not one person in ten, nor even one in twenty, knows what truths to urge upon the attention of either backsliders or of impenitent persons, with the view of promoting revival or of securing the conversion of souls in times of religious awakening. If called upon to engage in this kind of work, they would either urge the wrong truth upon the attention of the anxious, or else they would urge the right truth in the wrong way and so discourage them or mislead them. An instance might be named in which the pastor of a large, influential church, who, though he had gone through with the full course of study in the preparatory schools, on being asked by one of the deacons why he did not appoint meetings for religious inquiry, and ask those who were anxious to come to them, that he might point out the way of life to them, replied that he thought that he would let them alone and let them work the matter out philosophically. That pastor was informed that if this was his method of dealing with anxious souls he had better resign the pastoral office. The members of the Church liked the method of Christ and of Philip, the evangelist, better. Christ would have us let the spiritually dead bury those who are physically dead, rather than have us neglect the spiritually dead in times of revival, when the Holy Spirit is striving with them.

Hence, in doing evangelistic work among feeble churches, the constant aim and unwavering purpose should be to teach young converts and older Christians how to convert sinners from the error of their ways at the very outset, and accustom them to the use of such Scriptural means and measures that they can not help cherishing the Spirit, and employing the methods which will be sure to make them just as proficient as possible in this work. If a young convert is not taught how to do anything else in the kingdom of heaven, he should be taught how to do

this work, and do it successfully, too. And the instruction that is imparted to him with regard to his relationship to the family of which he is a natural member, or the Christian family of which he should be a spiritual member, if there is one near by in case his own family is an irreligious family, or with regard to his relationship to the church of which he may be a member; in either case the aim should be to cause him to understand that he is to be a winner of souls if he is not anything else.

CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE TAUGHT THE RIGHT USE OF
THE RIGHT TRUTHS.

And in pursuance of this object he should be put in possession of those truths which the Holy Spirit is generally in the habit of using for the purpose of producing conviction for sin, and in enabling the convicted to accept of Christ and so obtain salvation through him. The writer will always remember an incident which occurred in an inquiry meeting some years ago. A young man who was evidently under conviction for sin sat near the front seat. The evangelist held a Bible in his hand and slowly read John 1:12, "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them who believe on his name," and said, "Do you understand that?" "No, sir," said the young man. The evangelist read the passage again and said, "Do you not see that just as many as received Christ had power given them by means of which they became sons of God? Is it not just as certain that one becomes one of the sons of God, as that he receives Christ as his Saviour?" The evangelist then turned to 1 John 1:9, and slowly read, "If we confess our sins he is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "Do you not see that it is just as true that God forgives as that we from our hearts confess our sins?" The young man's countenance brightened up with a heavenly radiance and he arose and exclaimed, "I believe that God has forgiven my sins."

The apostle Paul tells us that faith cometh by hearing. But it is not every portion of Scripture that is used by the Holy Spirit in enabling sinners to exercise faith in Christ, any more than it is every kind of medicine that is used by the physician

in healing specific diseases. And it is the duty of those who are doing evangelistic work among feeble churches to be especially careful in the selection and the use of those portions of the Word of God which they desire to have the Holy Spirit employ in the work, so that the Holy Spirit can consistently use them and so that young converts and others can grasp hold of them and make the most efficient use of them. There are scores of men and women who can be taught to select and wield these truths just as effectively as pastors can, and who can pray for and with anxious souls just as fervently and as effectually as pastors can. And if evangelistic work is to be done at all in those communities where churches are feeble, and the number who know how to wield the sword of truths is small, this work should be done in such a manner that, when the evangelists have retired from the field, there will be those on the ground who know how to continue the work and how to prevent a falling away. It is really amazing how imperfectly this matter is understood in many communities.

An instance might be named in which three evangelical churches held revival meetings together one winter with large audiences, and many able sermons were preached and listened to without having a single addition to either church. The writer found several persons connected with the Baptist society, while making pastoral calls the following year, who gave good evidence of having been under conviction during that winter, some of whom were converted, and yet not a single word had been spoken to them personally, by either pastors or church members, during the entire series of meetings.

CHRISTIAN HOME CIRCLES AND EVANGELISTIC WORK.

In forming Christian Home Circles in neighborhoods which are more or less remote from the meeting-house, special pains should be taken to enlist as many Christian parents as possible, and have them take turns in leading the meeting as far as practicable, with the intention of having the meeting held in as many of the homes of irreligious families as are willing to open their doors for the meeting, with the view of reaching just as many of the members of such families as possible, by means of the most earnest and prayerful presentation of those truths of

the gospel, which, if accepted by them, will not only save them from sin, but which will bring peace and happiness to their homes, and which will enable them to understand the duties and obligations which God has imposed upon them and which they owe to each other as members of a family. And in order to do this work well, there is an imperative need of the services of those members of Christian families near by, who have not simply been aroused to a sense of those obligations which they owe to each other, but who have a lively sense of the obligations which they owe to the members of those irreligious families who live round about them, and who have passed beyond a state of indifference and a sense of obligation, into a frame of mind which enables them to see and feel that it is an unspeakable privilege and a source of joy to them to convey the bread of life to their perishing neighbors. Members of Christian families who have no higher sense of their privileges than simply to feel that it is a duty to preach the gospel to their neighbors the same as they might deal out bread to them, were their neighbors in a starving condition and they themselves had an abundance, are not fully prepared for the work which Christ has assigned them. The Saviour felt that it was both meat and drink to him to preach the gospel to those who were perishing around him. And hence, in forming Christian Home Circles in different out-stations, care should be taken by religious teachers to keep the minds of both parents and children fixed upon the standard which Christ himself set up with the view of keeping alive that sense of duty and of exalted privilege in the hearts of all who take an active part in the meetings of these circles, which will cause all to feel that it is an exalted privilege as well as a duty to engage in this work and to prosecute it with persistent zeal.

HOME CIRCLES AND CHOICE LITERATURE.

In communities which are remote from the great centres, where religious literature is scarce, and irreligious literature comparatively abundant, special pains should be taken to secure, if possible, a small contribution in money from all who are willing to give, for the purpose of procuring, from time to time, a quantity of the very choicest religious literature which can be

obtained, for the purpose of enlightening the minds of the people with regard to those truths which are of vital importance to the Christian home, and which will be helpful in promoting works of grace and in leading Christians to a higher and holier life. These books and pamphlets and papers should be used as a kind of circulating library, the worshippers taking a copy at one meeting to read at home and returning it the next meeting, and then taking another, so giving all of the members of the circle the benefit of this carefully selected literature, and gradually displacing the injurious literature which may now be found in the hands of the young people, in so many towns and hamlets. It will be frequently found that the Christian Home Circle, when well supplied with the right kind of religious literature and properly conducted by spiritually minded Christians, will become a more efficient agency in saving souls and in doing reform work, and building up the cause of Christ in districts and neighborhoods, than the Church at the centre of the town is, particularly if those who belong to the Circle are taught to discriminate between the process of choosing their superintendent and the process of ascertaining by prayer and scriptural balloting what person God has chosen for them, with the view of exercising a spiritual oversight over the Circle and also of representing the Circle, either as one of the deacons or as one of the standing committee in the official board of the Church worshipping at the centre of the town. This point is a very vital one and ought not to be passed over lightly by any religious teacher.

The office of superintendent of the neighborhood Sunday school, or the Home Circle in a district or neighborhood of almost any country town, is second only to the pastoral office in the Church which is at the centre, and, in some cases, is vastly more important to the inhabitants of that particular locality than the pastoral office of the Church is. But in order that the unity of the Spirit may be properly preserved among all of the members of the Church, and the commands of Christ requiring the gospel to be preached to every creature in all parts of the town be obeyed, it is necessary that all of these offices be filled by those whom God has set in the body as has pleased him, rather than by persons whom any party or clique may be disposed to choose. It is also very important that the persons who

are selected to fill these offices be carefully instructed by pastors and evangelists in order that the means of grace may be so conducted, both in times of religious awakening and at all other periods, as to prevent declension, and to continue a constant growth in grace among the entire membership of the Church, and in all parts of the town.

This matter will be more fully treated in the following chapter.

DIVINELY APPOINTED RELATIONSHIPS TO BE RECOGNIZED AND PRESERVED.

It is highly important that both young converts and older Christians be made to realize that there is a divinely appointed and truly heavenly relationship subsisting between themselves and others, not simply as members of one and the same Church, but as members of different Christian families in one and the same Church; and that this relationship has been appointed by God the Father, and has been consummated by the power of the Holy Spirit and by the ministration of angels as well as of men, and that the members of irreligious families are to be brought into the same relationship to God and to Christian families, and to the Church of Christ, that they themselves are now in through the prayers and efforts of God's people. And hence the absolute necessity of grouping young converts together under their divinely appointed leaders and guides, whether parents or those whom God has called to act as nursing fathers and nursing mothers, or deacons and deaconesses, or as pastors and teachers, in order that all may be filled with the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, and be so baptized by the Spirit as to be able to be used by the Spirit in whatever way or manner he may find it necessary to use them, while contending with principalities and powers, and with spiritual wickedness in high places, as he leads the hosts of Zion forward conquering and to conquer. Those who are familiar with the process by which the bodies of plants and animals are developed while in an embryo state, through all the various stages of development, are aware of the fact that the God of nature conducts the process according to a given plan and preserves these elements which are to constitute the different parts of the body or structure, always in their

proper relationship to each other. The God of grace works according to precisely the same laws when convicting and converting and sanctifying those persons who are to be members of the body of Christ. Each Church of Christ is a body, as truly so as the animal structure is a body. And each person is converted with the view of having him fitted into his proper place in the Church that is, or is to be, in the house, and also in the Church that is to be in the meeting-house, and also in the Church which is in heaven. And hence a knowledge of these and other important relationships must be constantly kept alive in the minds and in the hearts of Christians, in order to make them as useful and as happy as possible. And unless this fact is kept constantly in mind by those who are engaged in evangelistic work in communities where churches are feeble, or where a new church is to be formed, the converts and older Christians will not only forget that they are all of them parts of the body of Christ and members in particular, but there will soon be a spirit manifested by those who dwell in one district, which will cause them to say of the inhabitants of another district, "We have no need of you," and ere we are aware of the fact, the future body will resemble some of those monstrosities in the animal kingdom which show by their very structure that the body has been acted upon by secondary causes which have interfered with the plan of the Creator, thus not only marring the symmetry and destroying the beauty, but seriously impairing the usefulness of the body all through life, or it may be actually causing the death of the body. Hence, in all cases wherever a work of grace has been begun by prayer and supplication, as all works of this sort should be begun, either in some dwelling-house or other convenient place, it will be comparatively easy for the deaconess or whoever else may have taken the lead in the meetings, to hand the meetings directly over to some divinely appointed leader who is to be selected from among those who are on the ground, or from abroad, whenever the Macedonian cry is heard from some adjoining district, and still have the meetings increase both in numbers and in spiritual interest, provided that sufficient pains are taken to enlighten the members of the circle with regard to the relationship which they sustain to God and to each other, and to the families who reside in other districts, and show them how true it is that God will

care for them, and nurture them and bless them precisely in proportion as they try to care for and nurture and bless others. Christians generally need to be often reminded of the fact that God is accustomed to work in the kingdom of grace according to the same general laws in accordance with which he works in the natural world. We can no more destroy those channels through which peace on earth and good will to man are flowing out from the throbbing heart of the Almighty Saviour of men, into the hearts of all who are united to him as the branch is united to the vine, without doing great damage to his cause, than we can destroy the channels through which the sap of the vine flows into the branches without injuring the vine. Each young convert is not only prospectively a member of the Christian family, but he is also a member of the Church, prospectively, and each family, though a distinct body, is also a part of the Church the same as a city or town, though a separate municipality, is part of the Commonwealth. Hence, as the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, in answer to the prayers of certain persons at home or from abroad, led to the formation of the first Christian Home Circle, so the outpouring of the Spirit on the inhabitants of another district, in answer to the prayers of the members of the first Home Circle, should lead to the formation of the second Home Circle. And so on until a sufficient number of Christian families and Home Circles are formed to constitute a church for the whole community or town. By thus enabling the members of the different Circles to see that they have in these organizations the same provisions for steadfastness, growth and development which the early disciples had, prior to the time in which the churches were fully organized by the election of permanent officers, who were taken from among those temporary overseers who had proved themselves to be worthy, it will be comparatively easy to persuade all the converts to continue right on in the work of the Lord according to the divine plan. The members of these Circles should also be made to realize that all of the commands given by Christ and his apostles concerning their obligations to the family and the Church, and to the people outside of the Church, were intended to be the means of enabling them not only to walk in the Spirit, but to live according to the laws of life which is in Christ Jesus. And nothing is more obvious than the fact that the Holy Spirit

has been wont to take advantage of the facilities offered by the relationships which the Father has established between men on earth, both in the Church and out of it, and using these facilities for the purpose of adding to the membership of the churches, and also for the purpose of increasing the gifts and graces of the members. It was by means of the relationship subsisting between Mordecai, the Jew, and Queen Esther, on the one hand, and the relationship existing between Queen Esther and the king, on the other hand, that the Holy Spirit, on entering into the royal palace through the prayers of Mordecai, gained possession of the heart of Queen Esther, and then of the hearts of her maidens, and then of the heart of the king himself, in answer to the prayers and supplications of the queen and her maidens and of their kindred, the Jews. It was through the relationship existing between Nehemiah, the cupbearer of the King of Babylon, that the Holy Spirit obtained control of the king's heart and then of those officers of government who had charge of the king's forests and all other material resources which were needed in the great enterprise in which Nehemiah was about to be engaged. And hence the absolute necessity of having all who are to engage in evangelistic work taught to observe and prayerfully recognize all of the various relationships which our heavenly Father has established among the people. Any serious misunderstanding with regard to these all important matters is almost certain to cause more or less of those who are engaged in this kind of work to run counter to the will of God, and to become hinderers to the work, instead of being helpers. Hundreds and thousands of well-meaning men and women who belong to churches are perfect stumbling blocks in the way of sinners simply in consequence of the fact that, instead of being with Christ and with the Holy Spirit in their endeavor to establish right relationships between laborers and capitalists, they array themselves on one side or on the other, against Christ and against the Holy Spirit. And so of the relationship which God has established between man and woman, and between government officers and citizens, and between soldiers and military commanders. The reason why the Saviour bade the soldiers to do violence to no one and to be content with their wages, was not because he was so indifferent to their temporal welfare that he did not care whether they had

sufficient wages or not, but because he saw very plainly that, if their minds were deeply exercised concerning this matter, they would be in danger of losing that reward for spiritual well-doing which was a thousand times more important than their wages as soldiers, and because he also knew that by seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness first, all of these other things would be added.

The speediest and surest way that Christians who reside in one part of a town can secure large measures of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit upon themselves, is by being very fervent in prayer and very faithful in efforts for the salvation of sinners in other parts of the town; for such is the relationship that exists between themselves and God and the angels who minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, that the very instant that Christ sees that they are becoming unusually zealous in their efforts to secure the salvation of sinners in other districts, he makes the angels, who always behold the face of our Father in heaven, very zealous in their efforts to minister to both the temporal and the spiritual wants of those who are thus zealous, and also to the wants of their children. And undoubtedly one reason why the Saviour revealed to us the precious truth that those angels who are appointed as guardians to very young Christians do always behold the face of our heavenly Father was, that we might know that when he ascended upon high, where he has all power in heaven and on earth at his disposal, we may be sure that he will take special pains to see that those angels who minister to the heirs of salvation are faithful in their ministration to our little ones, if we are faithful in ministering to the spiritual wants of those who have no Christian parents to minister to their spiritual welfare, in remote parts of the community or town. He that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless return again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. The reason is obvious. God is in such causing them to will and to do according to his good pleasure. It was when Job prayed for his friends that the Lord turned his own captivity. And in such cases as that to which the reader's attention has already been called, where the mother of the six boys was suddenly bereaved of her husband, it was undoubtedly true that both the guardian angels of those boys and the Holy Spirit took advantage of the heavenly relation-

ship already established between the mother and the children, and not only increased the heavenly-mindedness of the mother, but quickened in her that sense of responsibility and of obligation which made both her and her sons even more true to God's purposes of mercy than they would have been if the husband and father had lived. It was on the same principle that the Saviour told the disciples that it was expedient that he go away from them, in order that the Comforter might come to them and lead them into all truth. Their future relationship to the Holy Spirit, already established by the Father, was such as to make it absolutely necessary for the Saviour to go away from them in order that the Comforter might come to them and abide with them. It is in accordance with the same principle that Christian women, whose relationship to the Christian family is such as to make it absolutely necessary for them to be more accurately and specifically instructed with regard to those truths which are of vital importance to the family than men are, and be clothed with a different manifestation of spiritual power than men are clothed with, in order that they may fulfil their divinely appointed mission in the family and in the Church, are exempted from the obligation to teach or preach in the Church, in order that, by simply putting on the heavenly adorning of the renewed nature, and resting from their labors while they sit in heavenly places and lift up their ejaculatory prayers to God, they may impress the truths of the gospel upon the hearts of men by their hallowed example, and at the same time be prepared to go forth to their labors in other assemblies thoroughly prepared for the work which the Head of the Church has assigned them. Hence, the absolute necessity of having these various relationships fully recognized, both in the prayers and in the preaching, and in all of the efforts of those who are engaged in the work of preaching the gospel.

THE RIGHT KIND OF EXPERIENCE, HOW OBTAINED.

Attention has already been called to the necessity of having a present experience of gospel truth in order that religious teachers may be successful in winning souls to Christ. But it is worthy of special remark, in this connection, that the Holy Spirit not only makes constant and persistent use of the different

relationships which the Father has ordained among men and in the Church, but he works in and through these in such a manner as to produce not only a present living experience of the power of the gospel, but he works in such a way as to produce that particular kind of experience that is necessary for the preacher to have, and for his auditors to have, in order that preachers may be as impressive as possible while preaching, and the hearers as receptive as possible while hearing the sermon. It is not every kind of Christian experience that is suited to the present purpose and work of the Holy Spirit, either on the part of the preacher or of the hearer. There are times in which people will never be moved as God wants to have them moved and as the Holy Spirit sees that they must be moved, unless the terrors of the law are preached amidst the thunderings of Sinai, and those thunders are so loud and the presence of Jehovah is so awful, that the hearers will beg that the voice of God may not be heard speaking to them again. And there are times when the still small voice is the only voice that is suited to God's purposes of mercy. There are also times when Christians must be made to feel their need of the joy of God's salvation so intensely, and be enabled to see the relation of this joy in their own hearts, to the production of the same joy in the hearts of others, that they will cry out from the very depths of their souls as did David, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, then will I teach transgressors thy ways and sinners shall be converted unto thee." There are times when impenitent men must be brought into that frame of mind in which they will not only believe in the doctrine of eternal death and the coming judgment, but they must be made to feel the terrors of that death and of the coming judgment, in order to make them cry out in anguish, "Men and brethren, what must we do to be saved." And nothing can be more obvious to the spiritually minded student of the Bible than the fact that these different kinds of experience, so indispensable to preachers and hearers, though they have so important a bearing both upon the impressive power of the preacher's delivery of the sermon and upon the receptive power of the hearer while listening to the sermon, cannot be acquired by any course of discipline or training, without the assistance of the Holy Spirit. The Bible abounds in incidents showing how constantly and persistently

the Holy Spirit has been wont to resort to the most extraordinary and remarkable expedients, by means of which, to give both preachers and hearers that particular kind of experience which is necessary for the parties to have, in order that the will of God may be accompanied in them and through them, to the saving of the souls of such as need salvation.

If the prophet Jonah had gone to Nineveh at the time he was first bidden to go, and had marched through the streets uttering God's message while in the frame of mind that he was then in, he would not only have failed to move the people to repentance, but he would have become the butt of ridicule, or perhaps a subject of personal violence. But when God shut him up in the belly of hell a while and made things so dark for him that he could not see the smiling countenance of God at all, nor even pray to him, but had to lift his streaming eyes up towards God's holy temple, and God had mercy upon him, he no sooner commenced his solemn march through the streets of Nineveh, uttering the message of Almighty God, than the whole city began to be moved. All put on sackcloth, from the king on his throne down to the meanest subject, and even the beasts of the stall were also clothed in the sackcloth.

No man can read the history of the prophet Elijah without seeing, if he is at all spiritually minded, that it must have been the terrible experience which he had while marching over the hills and through the valleys of the famine stricken land, and the sight of hillsides white with the bones of cattle which had been starved to death in consequence of the drought and famine brought on in answer to his own prayers, together with the sweet remembrance he had of the food brought to him by the ravens and the water drawn from the constantly diminishing stream of the brook where he had long prayed, which gave him those heavenly tones of voice, which, when heard by the widow of Sarepta, caused her to bake him a little cake when he rapped at the door of her tent like a wandering tramp at a time when she herself was going out to gather a couple of sticks of wood, and bake the last meal she had in her tent for herself and son and then die. Time would fail any one should he attempt to gather up the many startling incidents which are recorded in the Scriptures and in the ecclesiastical history, which show by what means the Holy Spirit has wrought upon those who were

to listen to the divine message in order to prepare them for a truly spiritual and receptive hearing, and upon those who were to preach the word, in order that they might proclaim the gospel in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. In some instances, we can almost hear the tones of the speaker's voice as we read the record of the delivery of their sermons. We can almost see the tears glistening in the eyes of those who heard these sermons. Sometimes the people fairly wept when the Word of God was read to them. This was true in the days of Ezra. Both the pulpit ministrations and the general conduct of affairs by Nehemiah, the prophet, were undoubtedly very essentially modified by his reasons of fasting and prayer and his journey among the ruins of the long deserted city by moonlight. God has always been wont to move both the hearts of the most successful preachers by remarkable providences and by startling events, whenever it has been necessary to do so, in order to give them that earnestness and impressiveness of delivery which is indispensable to the highest order of ministerial power in the pulpit. It is said that the Rev. Dr. Baron Stow, of Boston, was called from his study twice to administer consolation to those who had been bereaved by the loss of relatives, who were suddenly stricken down by the hand of death and who died without hope in Christ, during the day that he was preparing that memorable sermon on the text, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." This was the sermon which resulted in the conversion of more than one hundred persons who afterwards joined the Baldwin Place Church. While preaching that discourse the tones of his voice became so solemn and so impressive and so thrilling that the hearers were not only spellbound, but the minister who sat in the pulpit with him said to him, "Doctor, you will hear from that sermon." And he did hear from it and heaven itself heard from it. And the hosts of heaven have been hearing from it ever since the sermon was delivered. But while the Holy Spirit has been wont to resort to various expedients of this sort by means of which to intensify the preacher's power of expression, in order to make the delivery of the divine message as effective as possible in the minds and hearts of the hearers, he has never been in the habit of prompting preachers to repair to theatres, so far as we can learn, in order that they may listen to the most

successful dramatists and play actors, for the purpose of acquiring a better and more impressive style of pulpit oratory. If the Holy Spirit had been accustomed to resort to such methods as this, we should naturally expect to find some intimation of the fact in the history of the apostle Paul. He was a man whose bodily presence was not only weak, but his speech was even contemptible in the eyes of many of his auditors. Hence, we cannot help looking with some considerable misgiving upon the advice that is sometimes given to young ministers by certain modern elocutionists. The reason given for this kind of advice is, because certain play actors are far more impressive in their utterance than ministers of the gospel generally are. If the statement is true, it is rather a sad confession to be obliged to make. These actors are only imitators of what is real, at best. And if it is true that they are more impressive in their utterances than those who deal with heavenly realities are, even when professing to enjoy the assistance of the Holy Spirit while delivering their message, the question might very properly be raised whether it would not be wiser to appoint days of fasting and prayer, in order to obtain larger measures of the Spirit's presence and power to accompany these preachers, instead of sending our young men to the theatre to find good models for imitation when discoursing to the people. There may have been times when choicer dainties could be found in those receptacles which are commonly used for the purpose of feeding swine, than in some of our pantries. But one would hardly think of sending his servants to gather these precious morsels up for the use of his guests. It will be a sad state of things indeed, if the Spirit of God shall ever be so grieved away from the hearts of both preachers and hearers, that the pastors of churches become simply actors who win the admiration and applause of their hearers by the excellence of their performances in the pulpit, and yet save no souls. The apostle found no great difficulty in impressing divine truth on the hearts of his hearers, notwithstanding the fact that his speech was contemptible, during those parts of his ministry when he had a continual heaviness of spirit and felt that he could wish himself accursed from Christ, on account of his kindred according to the flesh.

It is said that the Rev. D. Howard Malcom, when pastor of the Federal Street Church, Boston, had a son who, though only

a little more than half grown to manhood, had become so rude and reckless that he actually took some of his young associates and immersed them in a watering trough, in imitation of his father who had recently been baptizing converts. His father was so deeply impressed with a sense of the awful guilt and danger which his son was in, that he could not sleep at night. Calling the attention of his wife to the matter, the two agreed to set apart seasons of special fasting and prayer for the lad, and finally resolved that they would not cease to pray for his conversion until God heard and answered their prayers. A spirit of travail came upon those parents which was unlike anything they had felt before, and caused them to get up in the night and pray together for him. The boy soon became very anxious about his soul and was soon after converted. And when the father baptized him, he told the members of the Church how it was that he and his wife obtained an answer to their prayers. That son afterwards became an eminent minister of the gospel. Every spiritually minded person can see that it was by working in and through the relationship which the Almighty Father had established between those two parents, causing them to pray as only two such Christian parents could pray, that the Holy Spirit produced that spirit of travail for the soul of that son which resulted in the son's conversion. If one or both of those parents had been impenitent, or had continued in a backslider's state, it is probable that their eyes would never have been opened to see the terrible guilt and the impending doom of that son, and the son would have been lost. And if that pastor had been a man who was in the habit of relying on his scholarship or ability to write and preach able sermons, rather than on the power of God for success, instead of being strong in the power of God and mighty in working works of grace, he would have been like a blind leader of the blind, and an immense stumbling block among his people. And yet there are scores and hundreds of ministers of the gospel in high standing in some denominations, who are in this very condition. And instead of teaching the members of the churches over which they are pastors to recognize the divinely appointed relationship existing between the Christian and the unchristian members of the family, and between deacons and deaconesses and the other members of the Church, and between pastors and private mem-

bers, and showing them how to concentrate their prayers and their efforts in such a manner that, by prayer and fasting they may be able to secure the largest possible measure of the spirit of travail for souls, on the part of Christians throughout the different parts of their parish, and going forth among the people as the apostle to the Gentiles did, warning every man and beseeching every man with tears to be reconciled unto God, they treat the whole matter of religious feeling as if it was a matter of indifference. In some instances preachers of the gospel have been known to boast that they have never been conscious of having any of those deep and pervasive and overwhelming emotions of heart which others speak of, and do not think it at all necessary that a preacher of the gospel should ever have such emotions. And hence they go forth among their parishioners and joke and jest in the same careless and jovial way that characterizes the men of the world. And still they wonder why God does not graciously appear among their parishioners and work works of grace in answer to their prayers and in connection with their faithful endeavors to prepare and deliver just as able and as instructive sermons as possible. These men seem to overlook the fact that it is not the immensely large guns and huge cannon balls, but the powder that lies back of the huge balls, and the sure aim, that does such terrible execution in modern warfare. God did not establish that remarkable relationship which we find existing between his own heart and the hearts of his children through the Holy Spirit, with the intention of having them think lightly, or speak carelessly of the work of his Spirit. The reason why the Spirit makes intercession for us in groanings which cannot be uttered, is because he wishes us to draw nigh to him in prayer, and obtain from him as goodly a measure as possible of the same kind of intercessory power which the Holy Spirit wields. And we never make a more grievous mistake in our lives than when we suppose that religious feeling is a matter to be lightly spoken of. The command is, keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. It is true that religion is not all feeling. It is also true that religion is not all the absence of feeling. And it is also true that religion is more largely feeling than careless and indifferent persons are apt to think it is. Spiritual love is the greatest of all of the Christian graces.

And love without emotion is no love at all. Indeed it becomes either indifference or positive hatred, the instant that emotion dies.

FALSE NOTIONS WITH REGARD TO RELIGIOUS FEELING
MUST BE CORRECTED.

Hence, the absolute necessity of correcting those false and highly injurious theories concerning the matter of religious emotion which now prevail among so many of the members of feeble churches. These erroneous ideas have been begotten, in many instances, by pastors whose pulpit ministrations have not only been destitute of spiritual power, and utterly wanting in true spiritual emotion, but whose going forth among the people has not only been destitute of all true spiritual emotion, but full of all manner of worldly emotions, and which have found expression in idle jokes and inconvenient jests, which, if not in themselves seriously harmful, are, in their relations to the work of the Spirit which may have begun to be wrought in the hearts of the people, the most injurious implements of warfare which the enemy of all righteousness can put into the mouths of careless and unguarded ministers of the gospel. It will frequently be found to be true that an idle joke or unseemly jest from any gospel laborer, on Monday, will more than counter-balance all of the good which a sermon or Sunday school lesson may have wrought during Sunday. And yet it is undoubtedly true that there are times in which preachers of the gospel should unbend and lay off the burden of ministerial care which rests so heavily and so continuously upon them. But they can do this in a Christlike manner and not in a Satanic manner, if they will. No preacher is obliged to exchange that heavenly adorning of the inner man, which should be beaming forth upon his countenance, for the peculiar expression of countenance which characterizes the clown and the buffoon, in order that he may lay off the burden of ministerial care. It is far easier for the true minister of the gospel to gently lay his burden down at Jesus' feet, and go forth among the people with sunny smiles and celestial joys beaming radiantly forth from his face, than to act the clown or the buffoon. And while it is true that there are times when the preacher should unbend, there are also times

when he should bend down and lie low in the valley of humiliation, and keep down by the side of his Master, until he sees the big drops of blood falling in clodders to the ground from the face of him who prayed in agony, long enough to catch the Master's spirit, if he does not sweat such precious drops of blood as the Master sweat. There should be times in the ministry of every preacher of the gospel, when the going forth of the preacher among his people should be as solemn and as awful now as it will be a little time hence, when he goes with the members of his charge up to the foot of the great white throne where he will see the books open, and the record of his ministerial life will be laid open before him in the presence of an assembled universe. And if a preacher of the gospel has not learned this all important truth, he has a very important lesson yet to learn, and he never ought to think of doing evangelistic work among feeble churches until he gets this lesson so well learned that no temptation on earth will cause him to forget it. He will find abundant use for this lesson if he labors among feeble churches for any considerable length of time. In order to prepare himself and the people with whom he labors for the coming judgment and for the heavenly world, he must experience by faith and the power of the Holy Spirit both the terrors of the coming judgment and the glories of the heavenly world in some good degree, otherwise he will never be able to convey a sufficiently vivid conception of these momentous realities to move them to repentance and faithful endeavor to flee from the terrors, on the one hand, and strive after the glories, on the other hand. A want of right feeling, together with the existence of erroneous views with regard to the necessity of an intensely deep and fervent emotion of heart, on the part of church members, will be generally found to be among the most important hinderances to genuine works of grace that are to be found in feeble churches. In some cases a preacher will scarcely begin to give true expression to the power of the gospel which he preaches, by suitable tenderness in his entreaties or expostulations, before he will find one and another remarking to him that they do not like to see so much of the human element in the meetings. They prefer to have the converts come in gradually, rather than to have them born into the kingdom under so much excitement. These persons forget that all the indifference and

apathy and luke-warmness that has characterized their conduct during the past years, and which is characterizing their conduct at the present time, is all of it either purely human or else Satanic, and that these qualities have produced the declension and enfeebled the Church. And hence it will frequently be found to be necessary to show this class of persons, not only that there is great danger of being vomited forth out of the mouth by the great husbandman, in consequence of their luke-warmness, but they need also to be reminded of the fact that the Head of the Church is a husbandman who farms both for the early and the later market. He sometimes forces the early ears of corn forward by extra cultivation, and gathers them into the heavenly garner, and leaves the young shoots that sprout up around the stalks of corn to yield their harvest later on. And sometimes he pulls off these young shoots that surround the stalks, and carries them away, in order that the fruit-bearing principle which is being absorbed by them may move up into the stalk and into the ear and fill the ears out plump to the very end. And hence it becomes a very important part of the work of both pastors and evangelists to remind both church members and young converts that when God begins to make his purposes of mercy manifest, in the conviction and conversion of souls in any community, it is not best, neither is it safe for them to remain in a careless and indifferent state while the Holy Spirit is hovering over them. The rod of chastisement will be applied much sooner than they realize in many cases, and the blows of this rod will be made to fall upon them far more heavily than they have anticipated; removing property, inflicting sickness, taking any kindred and friends whenever and wherever it may be found to be necessary, in order to arouse the slumbering sensibilities of the soul and bring on a right state of feeling, such as will ensure right action on the part of Christians whose services God means to use in promoting works of grace, and on the part of impenitent men whom God intends to save with an everlasting salvation. It matters not who may stand in the way of sinners, whether pastors or deacons, or parents or children. If the faithful ones are instant in prayer, the stumbling blocks will certainly be removed by repentance and reformation, or they will be taken away by the hand of death. An instance might be given where three very prominent members of a

church were opposed to their pastor, all were laid away in their graves in the course of a very short time, and the revival moved on, leaving the pastor without so much as a single opponent in the entire Church. In another instance, where the members were unwilling to contribute of their substance as God prospered them, a hail storm smote the early crops of the members so heavily as to take away from them four times as much property as it would have cost in order to have kept the pulpit supplied and the meeting-house open. These chastisements were followed by a revival in which the converts paid one-half of the indebtedness of the society, and those who contributed for the support of worship were increased threefold. No other being in the universe has ever wrought men up to such a pitch of excitement as the Holy Spirit sometimes has. And he has performed his mightiest and most permanent and beneficent works during those very times when men have been most deeply and intensely excited. We have abundant proof of this in the history of Jonah, and of Elijah, and Nehemiah, and in miraculous out-pouring on the day of Pentecost. Hence, it becomes us to leave it for the Holy Spirit to determine how much or how little excitement there shall be in any work of grace, while we faithfully attend to the duties which God has commanded us to attend to. The command to us is, to pray for the out-pouring of the Spirit and to be instant in prayer until we are endued with power from on high. The command requiring the disciples to continue in prayer until they were endued with power was based upon Christ's knowledge of the method which the Father desired to have the disciples conform to. This command is just as binding upon Christians now as it was in the days of the apostles. If this requirement is properly observed, there will very soon be an imperative demand not only for suitable leaders to assist in conducting prayer-meetings in different neighborhoods, but there will be a demand for the services of a preacher to take the lead of the meeting at the center of the town, in consequence of the fact that the Spirit of God is poured out so abundantly that people will be deeply wrought upon in different places, and will desire to assemble together at the center.

WHEN THE MISSIONARY OR STATE EVANGELIST IS
TO BE SENT FOR.

At this juncture, the state evangelist or missionary of the Convention should be sent for, and every available team should be procured for the purpose of bringing up the people to the house of God, and the deacon and deaconess should be yoked in with the most devoted Christians that can be selected from among the different prayer Circles, and be prepared for a hand to hand conflict which will soon follow, if the preacher does his duty and the disciples of Christ keep on praying. The preacher of the great assembly should now be especially remembered in prayer by every helper, and at all family altars, and in all of the closets of devotion throughout the town, that the power of God may rest mightily upon him and upon all people. There should also be an incessant pleading with God for the descent of the Spirit upon all places of business, and upon all classes of men who are engaged in these places of business, and upon the dens of infamy, and upon the haunts of vice. These prayers should be continued not only until the people who are in these places are moved, but so wrought upon by the Holy Spirit that they cannot help leaving their homes and haunts and coming up to the house of God to hear the gospel preached. It should be the aim of the preacher to select only such portions of the Word of God to preach upon as the Holy Spirit moves him to select. He should then pour out the truth without let or hinderance, and without any sort of fear of man before his mind, or the fear of any other being except God. And he ought to make it his constant purpose and aim so to preach that the hearers cannot help understanding the truth as it is in Jesus, and receiving it as only those who are wrought upon by the Holy Ghost can receive it. The group of helpers who have been especially active in the meetings, thus far, should continue to go forth during the day, talking and praying with the inmates of every dwelling wherever they can obtain admission. And they should conduct their conversation in such a way as to secure a willing and attentive ear as soon as possible, and in such a manner as to fix the attention earnestly and exclusively upon those trains of thought which tend directly towards the conviction and the conversion of those with whom they converse. There will be a

tendency, of course, in many cases, to divert attention from the object which the preacher has in view, either by getting into an argument concerning some particular doctrine, or talking about some matter that is foreign to the purpose which the Holy Spirit is endeavoring to accomplish. But those who go from house to house preaching to individuals, should be on their guard at this point. They have no time to argue questions of doctrine unless they have a direct bearing upon the work before them. Their duty is to open up the word of life to those who stand in perishing need of this word. If they cannot obtain a candid hearing on the subject that is uppermost in their own minds, and which should be uppermost in the minds of those with whom they converse, then let them ask for permission to pray with them, and let the most fervent and importunate prayer be offered which the preacher is capable of offering, and then let the preacher retire and come again soon if the party express any desire or even willingness to have the preacher call again. But on no account must the preacher who goes from house to house allow himself to lose that singleness of aim, and earnestness and persistency of purpose which has been wrought into him by the Holy Spirit. There may be times and circumstances when he ought not to stop long enough to salute any man by the way even, lest his own attention be so diverted from the object which he has in view as to cause him to converse with the person whose salvation he is seeking, in that heedless or careless and indifferent way which not only grieves the Holy Spirit, but which inevitably conveys the impression to the mind of the anxious person that religion is not, after all, such a very important matter but that it may be put off to a more convenient season. Hundreds and thousands of souls are being ruined and lost through the carelessness and indifference of luke-warm Christians, who, instead of going to the impenitent with a full consciousness of the fact that religion is a matter so important that it must not be deferred on any account, when the Holy Spirit is striving with the sinner, and also with a consciousness of the fact that the Holy Spirit is easily grieved away from the heart of the sinner in consequence of his indifference and his procrastination, and when so grieved may take his eternal departure, they go to these impenitent persons with so little singleness of aim and earnestness of purpose that they throw

the full weight of their influence and example directly into the scale on the side of the adversary of souls, who is eager to seize upon the word of truth and bear it from the heart at the very time it is beginning to take root. God only knows how many precious souls are ruined and how many revivals of religion are checked in their progress through the carelessness of those Christians who, if they only had their wits about them, they would both see and realize the importance of doing their very utmost, not only to bring anxious inquirers to immediate decision, but they would leave no reasonable means untried in order to induce them to bow their knees in prayer and confess their sins to God while the Spirit is knocking at the door of their hearts. It does not matter how tenderly the sinner may feel, nor how desirous he may be to obtain salvation, nor how resolute he may be in his determination to seek the salvation of his soul at some future time. He is in more imminent peril now than at any former time, and will be until he makes an unconditional surrender of himself to God in prayer, offered up through the energy of the Holy Spirit in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no proof that God is working in him to will and to do of his good pleasure, until the sinner himself gives expression to those emotions of heart which the Holy Spirit is producing. And this expression must proceed from the heart through the power of the Holy Spirit. To make his calling and election sure, the sinner must rely upon this power and act as he is prompted to act at the present time, and not wait thinking that he will act at some future time. He may not, and probably will not, have the prompting of the Holy Spirit nor the strength of the Holy Spirit to enable him to act at some future time, if he fails to act just now in the way the Holy Spirit is prompting him to act. Hence the absolute necessity, not only of enabling the anxious to realize the necessity of yielding his heart up to God in prayer, but of getting him to do this just as the Holy Spirit is prompting him to ask at the present time. The anxious person should also be made to realize that, as an earthly parent is more tenderly moved by the cry of the weak and helpless babe than by the cry of the grown up son, so God will sooner listen to the cry of the penitent sinner than the cry of the older Christian in all those cases where the sinner really yields to the promptings of the

Holy Spirit. Where the sinner does yield his heart up in this way, prayer is, in reality, the soul itself energized by the Holy Spirit, acting upon God the Father through the mediation of Christ. And the answer is certain, and in accordance with the will of the Holy Spirit, who is in reality a prime factor in the transaction. And the sinner is always grieving the Holy Spirit until he commits himself to God in prayer. An instance might be given where a gospel laborer went into a house, in time of religious awakening, for the purpose of conversing with the inmates, all of whom were avowed skeptics, and succeeded in getting three of them on their knees before leaving the dwelling, and enabling them to rejoice in the hope of salvation. This was done, of course, not simply by presenting to them the true doctrine of prayer, but by presenting this doctrine with the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit. There are times when the Spirit manifests his saving power in so extraordinary a manner that there are scores and even hundreds of men and women who are skeptical, who may be easily won to Christ if there are laborers at hand who know how to go forth and wield the right truth in the right manner. But somehow there seems to have come over the churches such an utter absence of all sense of fitness and need of proper adaptation in the use of the means of grace, that religious labor is about the only labor in which it seems to be supposed that there is no need of adapting means to the end to be accomplished. In many towns the members of churches have become so accustomed to a sort of treadmill course of procedure, that they never think of adapting the means to the end to be secured in any case. They will even continue to go right off to church without asking any impenitent person to ride with them, or taking any measures whatever to convey the people who are perishing for want of the gospel to the place where the gospel is being preached in the demonstration of the Spirit and with a power unknown before in the town where they live. The reader can judge concerning the worth of that class of helpers who know how to use their teams in times of religious awakening, when he learns that the writer has known a single man to drive his two-horse team, forty nights in succession, round through different neighborhoods to gather up the people. That person saw forty souls added to the Church in a single winter by this means in a small town.

THE TWO-EDGED SHORT SWORDS.

In one of our wars with Great Britain, one of our naval commanders took pains to supply a portion of his crew with two-edged short swords. He exercised these men in the use of this weapon until they became so proficient in their use that they could strike both right and left with very sure aim, with a sword in each hand. He then posted these men in a particular part of the vessel where they would be pretty well protected while the cannonading was going on. He then opened fire, giving the enemy broadside after broadside with his heavy guns, at the same time working his ship closer and closer up towards the vessel of the enemy. When the two ships came into close quarters the grappling irons were thrown out, making fast to the enemy's vessel. At an appointed signal, the men who were skilful in the use of the short swords leaped on board of the vessel of the enemy, each one with a short sword in each hand, and, striking both right and left with unerring aim, they cleared the deck of the vessel so soon that the enemy scarcely knew what was going on until the flag was lowered and the stars and stripes were run up the masthead.

There are scores and hundreds of towns in different parts of the country, where the members of the Church have been brought up in such a way that they know perfectly well how to use the hoe, the axe, the spade, the scythe, the sickle and the cradle, and they use these implements so skilfully and so persistently, week in and week out, that they are unconsciously conveying the impression to children and youth that worldly industry is the great business of life. And at the same time they give so little attention to the religion of Christ in their own families and neighborhoods and in the Church that they do not become sufficiently interested in the work of saving souls to become conscious of their need of divine power, and hence do not learn how to obtain it nor how to make use of it when it is obtained for them, in answer to the prayers of others. Much less do they ever learn how to select and use the two-edged short swords. And what is most unfortunate of all, perhaps, neither pastors nor theological teachers seem to have anything like an adequate conception of the importance of teaching the members of these churches how to select and how to wield

gospel truths, and how to conduct Christians into those places where God intends to have these truths wielded, and keep them busily employed in times of religious interest. A farmer never thinks of allowing his boys or hired laborers to roam here and there as they please during hay season. Nor does he suffer them to bring into the hay field the spade and the hoe, while he sets them the example of using the rake and the scythe. But somehow it seems to be expected that the religion of Christ will prosper, both in the family and in the neighborhood and throughout the town, even though there is no careful selection of implements and no vigorous application of these, either at home or in the neighborhood. It is expected that the minister at the center of the town will preach such sermons as will draw the people into the kingdom over every opposing obstacle that is now being placed in his way, in the homes of the people and in the various places of amusement which are kept full of interest by whatever power the enemy of all righteousness can bring to bear upon the occupants of these places. If pastors of churches and all other religious teachers could only be made to realize that the record which has been given us of the process by which such persons as the woman at Jacob's well, Zaccheus, Nicodemus, the amiable young man, and the eunuch and others, were awakened to a sense of their need of salvation and were conducted into the kingdom of heaven, was intended for our profit, to show us how to rely implicitly upon the power of the Holy Spirit while engaged in the work of saving souls, and how to select and use the right truths when endeavoring to reach different classes of sinners, and would expound these portions of the Word of God so faithfully as to enable their helpers to see how the work is to be done, and would then send them forth to converse with different classes of impenitent men with the view of adapting the truth to the different classes, as Christ and the apostles adapted the same truths which they use, they would soon be convinced of the fact that they need a large measure of spiritual power in order to be successful. And they would also begin to fast and pray, and ask others to pray for them, until they obtain this power. And having obtained it, they would rely upon it and make constant use of it in their families and in their places of business. There would then be such a constant manifestation of this power in the family and in

the neighborhood, and in the Church, that the young would soon get the impression that religion is the chief thing, and money-making and pleasure-seeking secondary affairs. And instead of having hundreds and thousands of our young people obtain their first lessons in mammon worship from their parents while engaged in the too eager pursuit of wealth, and going abroad to become the inmates of the saloon and the gambling den, and the brothel, in the crowded city for awhile, and then be brought back to their native town to die and be buried in the grave of the wicked, while their aged parents shiver around a fireless hearthstone or die in the poor-house, these young persons would be soundly converted to God and would become winners of souls, and would either remain in their native towns and build up beautiful Christian homes there, or, going abroad, they would continue to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness first and would come home often to cheer their aged parents, and would send back large contributions in money for their comfort and also for the maintenance of the gospel in their native towns. And hence the proper exercise of the gifts and graces of those who have learned by experience how to show piety first at home is, in reality, far more important in the homes of the people, and in meetings conducted for the purpose of teaching people how to build up Christian homes, than preaching in the pulpit of the Church possibly can be at the present time, in very many communities. And if the members of churches do not learn to realize the importance of putting forth the right kind of effort in this direction, and do not take advantage of the relationships which God has established between themselves and the irreligious members of their own families and of the families which live round about them, they may be sure that the Spirit of God will be grieved away from them, and will continue to allow the adversary of souls to take advantage of these relationships and use them as a means by which to ruin the members of their own families. There are scores and hundreds of Christians in good and regular standing in the churches, whose sons and daughters are already ruined for time and for eternity mainly through efforts of the children of irreligious parents who live round about. These parents will find, when they come to the bar of God, that they are largely responsible for these sad results because they did not maintain

a sufficiently high tone of piety at home, to secure the conversion of their children. Instead of keeping up a high tone of piety in their homes and in their business, and conveying the impression to their children that religion is not only the chief concern of mortals here below but the most joyous and blessed reality with which they have to do, and observing days of fasting and prayer, when necessary to secure the requisite measure of divine power to enable them to overcome the waywardness of their sons and daughters, they have allowed the children of the irreligious to lead their children off into vice. When church members meet these lost souls at the bar of God, they will find that they have something to answer for besides their intellectual powers and the implements of labor so vigorously used in the employments of everyday life. God will require them to give account for the use made of those Christian graces which were produced by the Holy Spirit in times of religious awakening, and for the truths of his Word, which, if wielded by men possessing warm hearts, would have been mighty in pulling down the strongholds of Satan.

BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

One of the most efficient methods which the adversary of souls ever employs in communities where Baptist churches are feeble and the churches of other denominations are strong, for the purpose of diverting the attention of anxious souls from the subject of personal salvation, and causing them to fail of the grace of God in consequence of their refusal to make an immediate and unconditional surrender of themselves up to Christ, is by urging the ordinance of baptism upon their attention and raising some objection against the Scriptural mode of observing this solemn and impressive ordinance. The adversary of souls knows perfectly well that the rite of baptism is not a saving ordinance and that Baptists have always maintained, from Christ's day down to the present time, that a person must first believe unto the salvation of his soul before he is, in any proper sense, fit to be baptized, or can by any sort of means be enabled to answer a good conscience towards God in baptism. Hence, all religious teachers should persist in working along the same line of effort that the Holy Spirit is working upon, and

should insist upon it that they will not discuss this matter at all when talking with the anxious, except so far and in such a way as may be necessary to convince them of the absolute necessity of first believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, so fully and so heartily and so implicitly as to be willing to follow Christ in whatever direction his example or teaching may lead. No person, when thoroughly enlightened, can receive Christ unless he is ready to receive whatever truth Christ taught or exemplified. And a person cannot more thoroughly prove that he does not in reality believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Scriptural sense of this term, than by refusing to yield to some requirement of Christ when fairly convinced that the requirement was taught by Christ. Hence, the necessity of insisting first upon an unconditional surrender of the soul up to Christ before entering into the discussion of the doctrine of baptism, or any other doctrine, except so far as may be necessary in order to enable the anxious soul to see and realize that all truths that were taught by Christ are, in reality, part and parcel of Christ. He was the truth itself in personal form. When the anxious soul has accepted of Christ as his personal Saviour, he is in reality saved, and needs only to be properly enlightened so as to understand what Scriptural baptism is, in order that he may see and feel that it is both a duty and a privilege to be buried with Christ in baptism. Such a person will be baptized even though it is a cross to him to submit to the ordinance. And if a religious teacher cannot enable the candidate to realize that it is a privilege to follow his Lord and Master in this ordinance, it is not best to urge him to go forward. It is by no means certain that he has been soundly converted until he gives that kind of evidence, which is to be found only in a desire to follow his Lord and Master. The rite of baptism being the initiatory rite of the Church, if the convert is right, at least he certainly will not desire to knowingly refuse to take the first step that his Master requires him to take, in the presence of an ungodly world. When the convert gives evidence of a desire to follow Christ as well as a desire to be saved, and has been so enlightened as to see that a desire to be saved without following Christ is a sinful desire, and may afford evidence that one is not saved; it is the duty of the teacher to show the convert that the Scriptural idea of baptism is that of a single specific ceremony and

not a family of ceremonies. This is evident from the fact that all of the sacred writers employ one word, and only one, to designate the ordinance. This word is baptism and is used in all cases where the rite is referred to throughout the entire New Testament.

The reader will observe that the sacred writers use the same word to designate the ordinance, and the mode of applying water in the ordinance, thus showing that the mode is inseparable from the ordinance. By this use of the word baptize, the sacred writers have also shown conclusively that the purpose of the Holy Spirit was to preserve the identity of the ordinance, whatever it may have been as observed by Christ, so that we may not only be able to follow his example, but know that we are following it. The sacred writers could no more have preserved the identity of the ordinance by employing two or three words to represent it, like sprinkle and pour and immerse, than we can preserve the identity of a hat by making it over into a vest or a pair of shoes. And it does not matter how many different meanings the word baptize, or any other word, may have in different connections, when applied to different objects of thought, no word in any language can have more than one meaning in the same or in like connections, when reference is had to the same object of thought. The word, John, may mean any one of a thousand different men, but it cannot have more than one meaning in any connection when reference is had to the forerunner of Christ. Though the word baptize might have forty meanings, it can have but one meaning in any passage of Scripture where reference is had to the act by which the example of Christ is to be followed in baptism. The pedobaptist idea of baptism is that of a family of ceremonies, any one of which they hold to be valid, whether immersion or pouring or sprinkling. But it is not possible in the very nature of things to describe or represent, a family of objects, thoughts or persons, in any language in the world, without using one word to designate the family name, and also one word to designate each of the names of the members of the family. To represent a family of three colors, red, white and blue, we must use the word color and also the words, red, white and blue. And so of a family of gases or a family of persons. If the pedobaptist idea of baptism is the correct one, we must

have the word baptism, and the words, immerse, sprinkle and pour, all used in the New Testament in precisely the same way that our opponents use these words in their sermons and books. No man can write a book on the subject of baptism and convey the pedobaptist idea of the ordinance in any other way than by using both the word that represents the family name, baptism, and also the words which represent the members of the family. Hence when we examine the New Testament and find that the sacred writers used one word, and only one, we know certainly that the pedobaptist idea of the ordinance is wrong. And since they themselves have always translated all of the other words in original Greek, except the word baptize, by some word in English which does not mean to immerse, we know from their own translations that the only proper meaning of the word baptize, in the Scriptures when reference is had to baptism, is to immerse. And inasmuch as they are always imparting more or less discipline both to the minds and hearts of their hearers, when reasoning in their pulpits and at their firesides and in their Sabbath schools in defence of their view of this ceremony, they must, from the very necessities of the case, be continually preparing the minds and hearts of more or less of the persons who listen to these arguments for a similar treatment of other doctrines. There are scores and hundreds and even thousands of persons who ultimately become Unitarians and Universalists, and skeptics and infidels, in consequence of the discipline acquired while perverting those texts of Scripture which pertain to the ordinance of baptism. There is no help for this, except by ceasing at once from arguing in defence of the erroneous view of this doctrine. The human mind is so constituted that the integrity of the reasoning powers will be impaired by maintaining an erroneous view of any doctrine, and unless God in his mercy interposes to prevent, the reasoning powers will lose their integrity altogether ultimately. Those who are guilty of reasoning in this way will find themselves in a condition where they will receive whatever error may be urged upon their attention, that happens to be congenial to the natural heart, and it will seem to them that this error is really taught in the Bible. And it is the duty of Baptists to set this matter in the clearest possible light before the minds of young converts and

before those who are accustomed to argue in defence of an erroneous view of the doctrine of baptism.

Many persons are disciplining the minds of their children and others, and preparing them for the reception and defence of the very worst of errors while teaching them an erroneous view of this doctrine, without realizing what they are doing. It does not take long to make a Unitarian or Universalist, or even an infidel or skeptic, of some persons, after you have taught them to embrace and defend an erroneous view of one doctrine. And God only knows how many precious souls have been ruined in this way. So far as the doctrine of the Lord's Supper is concerned, it ought not to be difficult for any religious teacher to show any disciple of Christ that when the Lord Jesus Christ came into this world and set up his kingdom he took formal possession of every square foot of ground there is on the surface of the whole earth, and opened all parts of it to the observing and teaching of every command that he gave, each in its proper order. And the only possible way by which we can have the Lord's Table open in any scriptural sense of the term, is by having the service so conducted that it will be open to the observing and teaching of every command of Christ, and closed against the observing or teaching of every error which any person may be disposed to substitute for the truth taught by Christ. There is no command in the New Testament requiring me to ask a blessing at the table before partaking of my daily bread with my family. But there is a very positive and explicit example of my Lord and Master, and a command to follow him as my pattern and exemplar. There is also a command requiring me to teach my children to worship the only true and living God, and to offer prayer in the name of Christ. And there is also the assurance that if I add to or take from the words of the prophecy of God's book in order to maintain my preconceived opinions or erroneous views, he will add to me the plagues written therein. Rev. 22: 18. Hence if I go to the house of some Christian to board and still claim the privilege of asking the blessing which precedes each meal, in the name of Jupiter, or of some other heathen God, every spiritually minded person can plainly see that I convert that table into an institution by which the children who gather about it for their daily food are taught to worship a false God rather than the Lord Jesus

Christ. And I exclude the loyal occupants of that dwelling from their own table by so doing. If the head of the family allows his children to receive their daily bread in this way, they will soon learn to pervert the Word of God in defence of the practice of asking the blessing in the name of a false God. The same principle applies with additional force to the Lord's Supper. The instant that the rites of sprinkling and pouring are introduced among the prerequisites for admission to this solemn and impressive service, as substitutes for baptism, the supper itself becomes the means of teaching the communicants to violate those commands of Christ which require all things to be done decently and in order. And the Lord's table, instead of being open to the observance of every command, becomes a piece of ground which is fenced off from the rest of the world by the adversary of souls, and is made subservient to the purpose of teaching men to pervert the Word of God in defence of an erroneous view of the ordinance of baptism, and a means of preparing them for the defence of other errors still more important. The ordinance when thus observed is frequently called open communion. But such a communion service is never open to loyal disciples. On the contrary it is closed by the Head of the Church with all the authority invested in those requirements of the great commission, which command us to teach those who believe and are baptized to observe all of Christ's commands in all parts of the world. The change which our opponents have made in the mode of observing the Lord's Supper has been wrought by the adversary of souls and not by the Holy Spirit. The adversary leads them to call this open communion simply for the purpose of deceiving the communicants, and preventing them from coming to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. It is well to bear in mind the fact that, though the ordinance of baptism is not a saving ordinance, it is an act of righteousness, and hence one of the things that accompanies salvation among true believers. No less than five persons have been known to be struck under conviction and led to Christ, simply by witnessing the baptism of willing converts. And in one town sixteen out of twenty persons who had been hopefully converted, in connection with meetings held in a Baptist meeting-house, lost their interest in religion and went back to the world, in consequence of the fact that their relatives, who belonged to

pedobaptist churches, discouraged them from uniting with the Church by answering a good conscience towards God in baptism, and tried to persuade them to gratify the preference of their relatives instead. The difference between the two courses of conduct seemed very small, no doubt, in the beginning. But it was immense in the ending. It only requires a very slight variation from the proper course in which a ship ought to move when sailing out of port, in order to be sure of being stranded on the rocks or sunk in some unknown sea. And when young converts yield to the promptings of the tempter rather than to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and gratify a sinful preference in favor of some human ceremony, instead of answering a good conscience towards God in baptism, it will not be long before they will acquire the habit of yielding to preference rather than to conscience, generally, and in very many instances they will make shipwreck of their faith. And hence the absolute necessity of having, at least, a few persons to labor in every revival in those communities where churches are feeble, who know how to be nursing fathers and nursing mothers to young converts, and show them the difference between seeking that spurious kind of religion which looks only to obtaining one's own salvation, and that genuine religion which aims not simply at securing the salvation of one's own soul, but also at promoting the glory of God and securing the salvation of others. Among men it is deemed a matter of the very first importance to have persons in the care of flocks and herds, who will tenderly watch over those lambs that are disowned by the mother, and bring them up by hand. But in our day some of those who have the care of the flock of God hardly know what it is to appoint nursing fathers and nursing mothers for those converts who have no spiritual parents. And sooner than give them a warm and congenial place under the fostering care of a Christian parent, they are sometimes thrust into some cold apartment outside of the family, where they are fed on cold food awhile to see if they are going to hold out. They are then baptized and admitted into the Church, and left to fight their way onward and upward as best they can, surrounded by all the various opposing influences which the irreligious members of their families can bring to bear upon them. Hence, they fall away in many instances.

THE APOSTOLIC ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH.

V.

The government of the apostolic Church is undoubtedly the most perfect government which this world has ever known, or ever will know, until the time shall come when he whose right it is to rule shall deliver up the mediatorial kingdom to God the Father, and he shall reign all in all. The power wielded by those who were in authority in the Churches of Christ in the days of the apostles was not a power that was obtained by worldly wisdom, nor by worldly might, nor by inheritance, but through grace. And when they obtained this power and were introduced into any official position, they were not taught to achieve greatness among their fellows by exercising authority upon them, but by rendering service to them. Mark 10:42. And among all the various services which pastors and other religious teachers can render to the cause of Christ in our day, there is no service more important than a careful study of the Word of God with the view of ascertaining precisely what constituted the real secret of that power which the apostles and other officers wielded, and in what way they succeeded in managing the affairs of the heavenly kingdom so successfully, and how it was that Christ and his apostles ascertained who the men and women were whom God had set in the body as had pleased him for the purpose of having them serve in office, and what measures they took to preserve the purity and efficiency of the official board, so as to avoid scandal on the part of those who were in office, on the one hand, and secure a very high order of industry and economy in the management of affairs on the part of those who were called of God to labor in different departments. Whoever will take pains to look into these matters very carefully, will find that the entire organization and management of the various interests of the Church was spiritual rather than carnal or worldly, and proceeded on the supposition that the Church is to be not only a living body, but

a growing body. Every man and woman in the Church is not only expected to be in the position for which the individual is best fitted to serve, by reason of both natural and spiritual endowment, but each person is to be thoroughly alive to the duties and responsibilities of the position which each one occupies, and true to the relationships which each sustains to others, thus enabling all not only to be constantly employed in such a way as to accomplish the best results, both by way of securing new accessions to the membership of the Church, but also by way of securing a constant development of both gifts and graces and a continual increase of spiritual power throughout the body. In the carrying out of these purposes of the Father as revealed and presented to us by Christ and his apostles, it is expected that all of the members will avail themselves of every opportunity which their circumstances will allow, for the purpose of securing the largest measure of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit that can be obtained by prayer and supplication in their closets of devotion and at the family altar, and in all assemblies where worship is conducted, in order that they may be able rightly to discern and heartily to appreciate those gifts which the Holy Spirit has bestowed upon those who are qualified for different official positions. It is also expected that all will share equally in the divinely appointed process by which those who are endowed with official gifts are singled out and introduced into office. These officers are not to be chosen through the wisdom of men, but through the wisdom of God manifesting itself in and through the members of the body in answer to prayer, causing them to select those persons, and only those, whom God himself has both qualified and chosen for different official positions. Hence it will be seen, on careful examination, that the government of the Church is both theocratic and democratic. God is everywhere recognized throughout the New Testament as the only being who has a right to determine what persons shall fill the different offices of the Church. And yet when the selection of officers is to be made, "the whole multitude of the disciples" of which the Church is composed are expected to take part in the process by means of which the persons whom God has chosen are looked out. And the Holy Spirit is not only expected to take the oversight of the process in answer to the prayers of all, but he is

also expected to act in and through the multitude—in such a manner that, while all of the members of the Church act voluntarily and very freely, they will also act graciously, and so be led to unite in the selection of those whom God has chosen not by constraint, but by choice; the members of the Church desiring nothing so much as to ascertain what persons God has set in the body for the purpose of having them fill these different offices. Hence it is expected that, while all are endeavoring to ascertain by prayer and supplication those whom God has chosen, all will carefully examine those qualifications for office which the Holy Spirit has designated in the New Testament and will diligently compare these qualifications with those which are possessed by the men for whom each one prepares his ballot. And if all are faithful in their endeavor, it is believed that the majority of the members of the Church, to say the least, will be led by the Holy Spirit to select the very persons whom God has chosen. And hence the persons so selected may with propriety be spoken of as the men whom the Holy Spirit has set over the Church. He is the Being who, in answer to prayer, has so guided the minds and so directed the thoughts of the members as to enable them to discriminate between those who have and those who have not the qualifications designated in the New Testament. He also has kept them from preparing their ballots for some friend, or relative, or partisan, and has caused them to record the names of those, and those only, whom they sincerely believe to have been chosen of God. Hence the object for which meetings for the election of church officers were held in the days of the apostles was not to choose officers, but to ascertain by prayer and Scriptural balloting who those persons were whom God had chosen to fill the different official positions in the body.

THE SELECTION OF THE APOSTLES.

Christ himself taught us by his own example, at the time that the apostles were selected and introduced into office, precisely how we are to ascertain whom God has chosen to fill the different offices of the Church. The only important difference between his efforts and ours being the simple fact that he made his selection through the unwritten revelation of the Holy

Spirit. We make use of the written revelation of the same Spirit. We shall fail, and fail most disastrously too, in our endeavor to accomplish the desired object, unless we carefully follow the example which Christ has set before us in the gospel. According to Matt. 9:36-38 and Matt. 10:1, Mark 3:13, Luke 6:12-16, our blessed Lord was surrounded by vast crowds of people who were eager to hear the gospel at the time the apostles were chosen. Turning to the disciples he exclaimed, "The harvest truly is plenteous but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." He then left them near the base of the mountain, and ascended up beyond them a little distance, probably about a stone's cast or so, and there prayed all night long, and evidently with regard to the very same matter concerning which he had commanded them to pray, for he was not the being to ask them to pray for an object of such momentous interest as that which was then engaging his attention, and then go into the presence of the Father and spend the night in praying about some other matter of far less consequence. The disciples must have been very near him during that memorable night or they would not have known that he prayed all night long. Most likely they both prayed and kept vigilant watch close at hand, and listened frequently to catch the burden of his prayer in the same manner that they afterwards did in Gethsemane, when he sweat great drops of blood, falling down the ground. According to Luke, Christ came down from his position on the mount a little above them, to the place where they were when it was dawn. According to Mark, when the disciples gathered about him in the early morning, he called to himself whoever he would, plainly implying that the selection of the twelve had already been made while he was alone with the Father in the mount, so that all he had now to do was simply to call these persons by name and they came to him. Knowing, as we do, that he did not come into the world to do his own will, but the will of the Father, and that he was so bent on this determination that he could not do anything except what the Father did, it is certain that he did not put his own choice or preference into the transaction, but relied upon the Holy Spirit to both make known the Father's choice, and also to enable him to make the Father's choice or preference a substitute for his own.

He thus set an example for his disciples to follow to the end of time; teaching them not to choose whoever they please for Church officers, but to be beside themselves unto God when engaged in so important a transaction as the election of Church officers, and, having put God in the place of self, to resolve that they will know no man after the flesh, but humbly ask their heavenly Father to show them by his Spirit whom he has chosen, by directing their attention to such persons as possess the proper Scriptural qualifications, and by causing them to discriminate between those who have these qualifications and those who have them not, and also by causing them to be drawn towards those whom God has set in the body to fill the vacant offices in the same way that Christ was drawn towards those whom the Father had selected to be apostles. We know absolutely nothing with regard to what occurred between Christ and the Father during the hours in which this remarkable transaction was going on, except the simple fact that the Son was engaged in prayer. And we never ought to know what is going on between any disciple and his heavenly Father while he is making up the list of names which he is to cast into the common receptacle of the Church to which he belongs at the time that Church officers are being selected. It is sufficient that the disciple be as his Master in this matter. The transaction is too sacred to admit of being laid open to the scrutiny or observation of others—and it would frequently become a source of envy and jealousy between different members of the Church, if it should become customary for the members to let others know what thoughts and feelings have passed between themselves and God, while endeavoring to ascertain by prayer and reflection and Bible examination what persons the Father has set in the body to fill certain offices in the Church to which one belongs. The burden of Christ's prayer while up in the mount undoubtedly was, "Father, show whom thou hast chosen." And the fact that the disciples were very near him and knew that he prayed all night long, taken in connection with the fact that they repeated the same prayer almost in the same words, only a short time afterwards, when Matthias was selected to take the place which had been occupied by Judas, makes it almost certain that they not only learned the process by which the officers of churches are to be selected from Christ, but they obtained so

clear and so impressive an idea of the worth of prayer for divine guidance and direction on those occasions when candidates are to be selected and brought forward, that they instinctively fell into the habit of asking God to show them by his Spirit whom he had chosen, whenever and wherever Church officers were to be selected. Moseheim, the early historian, says that it was an established custom among the early disciples to write the names of the persons whom they believed to be chosen by God to fill a particular office, on dice or parchment, and cast these into the urn, saying as they did so, "Lord, show whom thou hast chosen." An established custom among the early disciples when in harmony with the teaching of Christ and of his apostles presupposes the existence of a succession of transactions extending back either to Christ's own example or to his teaching, or it may be to both, giving rise to the custom; for the apostles obtained the customs and usages which they practised from Christ. And hence any custom or usage among the early disciples that is in harmony with their teaching must have emanated from Christ. That the disciples who met in the upper room in Jerusalem did not go from the protracted prayer-meeting into a business meeting of the Church, and there cast lots after the manner of the Jews or heathen, in order to ascertain which of the two persons whose names were brought before them should occupy the vacant apostolic chair, is very evident from the fact that Christ did not come into the world for the purpose of introducing the customs of either Jews or heathen into his kingdom, but to introduce into his kingdom a set of customs and usages from heaven, which would ultimately drive out of the world both the customs of the heathen and the customs of the Jews. Hence the casting of lots, at the time that Matthias was chosen, must have been quite a different transaction than the act of casting lots by Jews or heathen.

These disciples had the example of their Lord and Master before them. And if their prayers for the descent of the Holy Spirit had availed anything, they must have begun to feel the quickening influence of the Spirit reminding them of those truths of the Scriptures which had a bearing upon the transaction in which they were about to engage. Peter especially shows, by his remarks and his ready reference to those prophecies of the Old Testament which pertain to Judas and to

the statement of Christ concerning the obligation to bear witness to Christ and his resurrection, that he was now being deeply wrought upon by the Holy Spirit. He evidently felt as he spoke, that it was absolutely necessary that some one be selected from among those who had companied with them from the baptism of John, until the time that Jesus ascended up to the right hand of the Father to bear witness with the eleven to Christ's resurrection. And in some way these disciples had evidently come into possession of a very positive conviction that it was the prerogative of God to choose the person who was to take the position so recently occupied by Judas, and also that the choice of God was one of the two persons whose names were brought before the assembly. These two ideas are very clearly and very impressively conveyed to us in the prayer which was offered before the lots or ballots were cast. It is not often that a body of intelligent Christians go to God in prayer asking him to show which of two persons he had chosen to occupy a given position, unless they have been previously taught to believe that God is the being, and the only being, who has a right to choose. And such persons would not be likely to ask him to show them which of two persons he has selected, unless they were in possession of some Scriptural method by means of which they were able to ascertain who the choice of God was, and had already resorted to this method, and had come within one of knowing precisely whom God had chosen. We have to account not simply for the fact that these disciples fully recognized that the right to choose belonged to God, and the right to ascertain by prayer belonged to them, and also for the fact that they were so confident that the choice of God fell between these two men rather than between any other two, or between one of these and some other or several other persons; but we must account for these facts in connection with the example and teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ, at the time the eleven were themselves chosen, and also in connection with the promise that the Holy Spirit should lead them into all truth. We must also account for these facts in connection with the fact that the disciples continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, and the breaking of bread and the prayers, one of which doctrines and prayers was the doctrine taught by the apostles concerning the proper method of electing Church officers, and the prayer offered on

the present occasion which, according to Moseheim, became an established custom in the early churches. It is frankly admitted by those who maintain that the apostles cast lots in order to determine which of the two men whose names were brought before the assembly should fill the vacant office, that the present is the only instance in which the lot was so used. This fact alone ought to be sufficient to convince every candid inquirer after truth that this view cannot be the correct view. For in order that the disciples might continue steadfast in the apostle's doctrine and prayers, the custom of offering prayer and then casting lots after the manner of Jews and heathen should have continued right on in the Church for generations to come. And yet we are told by very able divines that the disciples in the upper room "devoutly referred the matter in controversy to the overruling Providence of God, by offering prayer and then casting lots." If casting lots after the manner of heathen or Jews, in order to determine which of the two persons should occupy the vacant chair, is a transaction that is fit for the kingdom of heaven, there is no need of praying over the matter in order to secure its admission among the customs and usages of the kingdom. But if it is not fit for the kingdom, then the more prayers there are offered over the transaction the worse it is for the usage, and also for the persons who offer such prayers. And the wonder is, that our opponents do not see this. It is said that the Rev. Dr. Wayland, late president of Brown University, was once lecturing to a class of students concerning the miracles of Christ. There was one young man who seemed to be utterly unable to comprehend the difference between the violation of natural law without good and sufficient cause, and that providential interference with natural law which is sometimes necessary in order that the Creator may accomplish some beneficent object which is far more important than those objects which are contemplated in the ordinary course of nature. The young man arose in the class one day, and said, "Doctor, what would you say if I should tell you that when I was coming up to the college the other night, the lamp posts turned round and round, and the paving stones flew up out of the street and hit me in the head?" The Doctor put his spectacles up on to his heavy brow and said, "I should ask you where you had been, my son?" When a man reads such comments as we

sometimes find in the commentaries of some of those learned scholars who speak of devoutly referring so important a question as that now under consideration to the providence of God by prayer and the casting of lots after the manner of Jews or heathen, he feels almost inclined to ask these learned men where they have been. Most persons begin important transactions in the kingdom of heaven in very nearly the same manner that they end them. And if the disciples of Christ actually did cast lots in the way these learned commentators suggest that they did, it is altogether probable that they cast lots also in order to ascertain what two persons among the multitude, numbering about one hundred and twenty persons, should have their names brought before the assembly. And if they did this with a knowledge of Christ's example and teaching in full view and the Holy Spirit bringing to their remembrance the things which he had taught them, we shall be obliged to carry this method of disposing of the vacant apostolic chair directly back to the all night long prayer-meeting on the mount, and suppose that the Lord Jesus Christ spent the night in praying and in casting lots after the manner of Jews or heathen. It would seem, however, that an idea so revolting as this, when taken in connection with the fact that, according to Christ's own word, it is sufficient for the disciple to be as his Master, would be quite sufficient to drive every reasonable person from so untenable a position and make them willing to admit that the most plausible and only reasonable supposition which any candid and impartial inquirer after the truth can make concerning the matter now under consideration, is that the disciples were in full possession of the Scriptural method of electing Church officers—having been taught this method by Christ himself and, true to his example and teaching, they had previously repaired to their closets of devotion in imitation of their Lord and Master, and, having each one carefully noted down the names of the persons whom each one believed to be in full possession of the qualifications required to fill the vacant apostolic chair, on bringing these lists of names together and comparing them it was found that two persons, Justus and Matthias, had received a larger number of ballots than any others, or it may be that all were united in the selection of the one or the other of these two persons. And being perfectly agreed with regard to this matter, they all felt

very confident that the choice of God rested upon the one or the other of them. And since it was the prerogative of God to choose and the province of the Holy Spirit to guide the minds and hearts of all in such a manner as to enable all to unite upon that one whom God had chosen, the names of the two were brought before the assembly and prayer was then offered with the expectation that the Holy Spirit would so guide and direct the minds of all that when the ballots were cast and counted the result would show whom God had chosen. A ballot is just as truly a lot as any other lot is. The word is compounded of the word ball and lot, and indicates the fact that the custom once was, and now is, in some instances, to vote by means of balls of different colors. We sometimes blackball a man when we wish to prevent his election. A ballot represents the share or part which a candidate has in the transaction, by means of which we determine who shall fill a given office, as truly as a lot shows what part a gambler has in a gambling transgression. And undoubtedly the word lot should either be translated ballot in the passage of Scripture now under consideration, or else it should be so interpreted that it will mean only that kind of lot which is fit for the kingdom of heaven. The word lot, as used by Jews and heathen, is characteristic of the kingdom of darkness, and hence is not fit for the kingdom of God. It can no more have the same meaning in the kingdom of God that it has in the kingdom of darkness than the phrase, "eat my flesh or drink my blood," when used by Christ, can have the same meaning that the phrase has among cannibals who literally eat the flesh of their fellow men.

THE SELECTION OF THE SEVEN ALMONERS.

The looking out of the seven men of honest report full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, to take the oversight of the distribution of alms to the widows in the Church in Jerusalem, was unquestionably done under the immediate guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit in answer to prayer. The word here rendered, "look ye out," Acts 6: 3, is everywhere else rendered visit, throughout the New Testament. A visit always implies the presence of two persons. And to visit out seven men, in the case now under consideration, implies a leading forth of the

minds of "the multitude of the disciples" by the Holy Spirit to one and another, as their thoughts are turned in the direction of the persons whom each believes to be in full possession of the qualifications designated by the apostles, with the view of quickening the power of spiritual discernment so as to enable each one of "the multitude" to discriminate as carefully as possible between those who possess the proper qualifications and those who do not possess these; so enabling each to carefully note down the names of those, and those only, whom each believes to have been chosen of God and set in the body to fill the office. Hence the apostles who were perfectly familiar with the divinely appointed method of selection, and had unquestionably faithfully explained the method according to the requirements of the great commission, either on the present occasion or at some other time, evidently expected that the disciples would seek and obtain a visit of the Holy Spirit from on high in answer to prayer, and then allow themselves to be led by the hand, as it were, to the men whom God had chosen, their thoughts being turned first to the qualifications designated in the injunction of the apostles, then to the qualifications possessed by the men whom they recognized among the multitude as having these qualifications, until each one fixed his attention upon the names of seven persons, who, according to his best judgment, answered to the requirement of the apostles. These lists of names, when brought together and diligently compared, would necessarily reveal to them those persons who were chosen of God, in case the brethren were acting under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. And if their hearts were all right, the brethren so selected would be their choice also. The very accuracy and precision with which the qualifications for office are designated by the sacred writers, in the passage of Scripture now under consideration and in other portions of the New Testament, and the positiveness with which the members of churches are commanded to select such persons as possess the qualifications designated, taken in connection with the fact that pastors are required to insist upon the actual possession of these qualifications, as conditions on which alone the candidate shall be appointed to the office for which he is selected as a candidate, and also the fact that these qualifications are, in all cases, more or less of them spiritual rather than natural, and hence discernable

only by those members of the Church who are spiritually minded, —these facts all go to prove that, according to the divine plan, the selection and appointment is to be made not simply by those who are Christians, but by persons who are in possession of so much of the presence of the Holy Spirit as will enable them to discern spiritual things, and to discriminate between the spiritual and the unspiritual when making their selections. And in those cases where the majority of the members of a Church are soundly converted and walking in the Spirit, and are taught to understand the Scriptural method of selecting candidates for office, if prayer is properly offered there will generally be at least a handsome majority of the members who will be led by the Spirit; and when the result of the election is announced they will be able to know what persons God has chosen to fill the vacant offices just as truly as the disciples knew in the days of the apostles. The fact that the board of officers in the churches to which the apostle James addressed his epistle was composed of persons who possessed such faith and importunity, when engaged in prayer, that the sick could send for them and ask them to offer prayer in their behalf—confidently expecting that their sins would be forgiven and that God would raise them up, can be accounted for in no other way except by supposing that the members of these churches were persistently taught by the pastors and their associates, the apostles, to follow the example of their Lord and Master, and pray for the assistance of the Holy Spirit and make their selection of candidates for office while alone with God, and with a faithful use of the written revelation which the Holy Spirit has given them in order that they might be enabled to comply with the requirements of the Head of the Church, just as accurately as possible at such times. James 6 : 14, 15. And in order that we may realize how much more faithfully and how much more accurately the disciples of Christ actually did comply with the requirements of Christ in this direction, than Christians are now in the habit of doing, we have only to consider that we, though living in an enlightened age and accustomed to select Church officers from among those who, for the most part, have been reared in families who profess to be Christians and who have been accustomed to live in good society, yet find frequent instances of immorality causing scandal among those who fill high offices

in the Church. And yet there is not so much as one recorded instance in which scandal was produced in the days of the apostles, in consequence of immoral conduct by any Church officer, either male or female, and but comparatively a few offences of this sort even among the private members of the churches. These cases are rebuked so sharply by the apostle to the Gentiles as to leave no room for doubt with regard to the treatment that those officers would have received who should have been guilty of any such offence. No fair minded man can carefully peruse the Sacred Volume and read the record of those early times which we find in profane histories, without seeing that it must have been in consequence of a most accurate and faithful compliance with the example and teaching of Christ, not only on the part of the apostles, but of the pastors and the deacons and the deaconesses of those churches, and also of "the multitude of the disciples" of which each church was composed, that the purity and the spiritual power of the official board was preserved and handed down from generation to generation in some communities, and was propagated from community to community in other instances. And hence the extraordinary success which attended the efforts of the early disciples when engaged in the work of preaching the gospel, and in planting churches in heathen countries. The only way in which we can be equally successful is by conforming to the same divinely appointed method, and accustoming the members of our churches to repair to their closets of devotion, and there prepare their ballots for those, and those only, who are believed to be in full possession of the proper Scriptural qualifications for office. Of course there may be a certain measure of success in those cases where the different offices of the Church are filled by Christians who have only a portion of the qualifications designated in the Word of God. A man will have some measure of success when running a manufacturing establishment with incompetent overseers and with half the wheels disconnected with the drive wheel, in consequence of a rupture of more or less of the belts by means of which the power is brought to bear upon different parts of the machinery, but a wise overseer will take special pains not only to connect all parts of the machinery with the drive wheel in a proper manner, but he will make it his constant aim and unwavering purpose to have his

first and second-hands so selected and instructed as to secure perfect harmony between them and those who are under their supervision. And he will see that all parts of the machinery are well lubricated, so as to prevent friction and make all the power that is available just as useful as possible. There is vastly greater need of care in the selection and adjustment of the members of the official board of a Church than there is in the selection of the overseers of a manufacturing establishment. Only a very small amount of friction between the pastor and the superintendent of the Sunday School, or between the pastor and one of the deacons, or between the deacons and the private members, will frequently stop the flow of good feeling all through the Church and seriously divert the attention of the members from the legitimate work of the Church, and will make the preaching vain and the exercises of the prayer-meeting worse than in vain. Hence the absolute necessity of accustoming the members of the Church to the practice of repairing to their closets of devotion, and there asking for that wisdom which comes down from heaven, instead of relying upon their own wisdom or upon the wisdom of a nominating committee when about to select Church officers.

God holds us responsible to him not simply for those results which are secured by the members of a Church where the pastor has been selected by some worldly minded man, who has manipulated the entire process by which the call to the pastor has been extended, and where the deacons have been chosen in the same way and where the pastor's salary has to be paid in part with funds drawn from the Convention, in consequence of the fact that a portion of the members of the Church will not contribute because they are not allowed to repair to their closets of devotion, in common with the other members of the Church, and there ascertain by prayer and Scriptural balloting whom God has chosen to be their pastor—but he holds us responsible for results which might be obtained, in case all of the requirements of the Scriptures which pertain to the selection of Church officers were fully carried out. The same principles apply to Associations and to State Conventions and to other religious organizations. Our duty is to ascertain what persons God has chosen to fill the different offices and not to choose officers for ourselves in any case.

It is only a few years since the writer was called to sit in council with other brethren, on a case where an excluded church member, with a few associates, manipulated the entire process by which the Committee of the Association was appointed and the council was organized, in direct violation of the requirements of the New Testament and the established usages of the denomination, without giving the other party any opportunity to be heard before a Committee of the Association, to ascertain whether the party making complaint had a just cause for calling upon the Association to interfere or not. The council was thus virtually appointed by an excluded church member and a very few associates. The case was then put into the hands of an unprincipled lawyer, and a detective was employed and a sufficient amount of false testimony was brought up and carefully manipulated, to turn the scale in favor of the party who had been the chief cause of the discord in the Church and who ultimately succeeded, with a few of his associates and partisans abroad, in gaining possession of valuable Church property and in ruining the pastor of the Church. A careful examination of the testimony employed, after the decision of the council had been made, showed not only that it had been largely bought up, but that the party procuring it did not take pains to examine it with sufficient care to ascertain whether it was too conflicting to be true or not. As a matter of fact, a considerable part of it was so conflicting it could not be true. The writer now has in his possession a letter written by a very prominent witness, whose affidavit was used against the pastor, who takes special pains to request that the widow of the late pastor be informed that it gives him great pleasure to remember her late husband as a Christian, a gentleman and a scholar. And yet this man was condemned on the charge of drunkenness. There is always a possibility that discord may arise at almost any time among the members of some one or more of the churches belonging to an Association, which is liable to produce division in the Church, or the alienation of a sufficient number of members to reduce the material income of the Church to such an extent as to make it necessary for the remaining members to call on the Convention for aid to assist the Church in supporting a pastor. And in such cases the material loss is by no means so detrimental to the cause of Christ as the loss of spiritual

power occasioned by the discord. And as a general rule it will be found that God has placed in the Association both pastors and laymen who are singularly fortunate in the possession of that rare combination of qualities which makes them highly successful in soothing irritation and restoring unity, and bringing about good feeling among the members of the churches to which they belong, whenever there is discord. If these brethren were carefully looked out by the delegates who are sent to the Association from year to year, and solemnly set apart by prayer and supplication for the Holy Spirit to accompany them, by the assembly appointing them, and were carefully reminded of those obligations which the Head of the Church has imposed upon them, with the view of having them act as a Standing Committee of the Association, to extend the fraternal greeting of the more prosperous churches to the members of the weaker churches, and to assist them in conducting revival meetings, it being also understood that their services are available when called for by parties who may be aggrieved, to act as arbitrators, in case of any misunderstanding between the members of any Church, there is no question but that such a committee would be able, in very many instances, to restore unity and harmony and avoid the necessity of taxing the resources of the Convention for the support of pastors, who, without the aid of such a committee, must draw quite a percentage of their salary in some instances from this source, in consequence of the disaffection of a portion of the members of the churches over which these pastors preside. The committee thus appointed would also be able to prevent more or less of those scandals which are now produced by councils in which one or both parties resort to such unjustifiable expedients in order to carry their point, that the council oftentimes becomes even more injurious to the cause of Christ than ordinary suits at law, which are so highly censured by the apostle to the Gentiles. 1 Cor. 6:1. We have only to dispense with the services of the committee on nominations in our Associations and Conventions and restore the urn, or ballot-box, to its proper place on the table of the secretary, and accustom all of the delegates to the habit of repairing to their closets of devotion before they come into the assembly, and there ask God to show them by his Spirit and by his Word whom he has chosen to fill the different offices, and then take their Bibles and

look at the qualifications which God requires and carefully look out the men who possess these qualifications, and note down the names of such, and only such, as each one believes to be in possession of the gifts and graces designated in the Word of God, and cast these lists into the common receptacle, with a fervent prayer that God will show whom he has chosen, in order to ensure the selection and appointment of the very men whom God has set in the body as has pleased him to fill the offices. It would be eminently fit and proper, of course, for the members of the assembly to spend a few minutes in prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit, during the time that the tellers are out, counting and comparing the ballots that have been prepared in the closets of prayer. And in those cases where the members are not fully agreed in the first ballot, they most likely would be agreed at the second balloting. If the moderator should call the brethren thus selected forward, and remind them of the duties and obligations which are imposed upon them by the Head of the Church, and should ask the assembly to unite with him in prayer for the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit on their behalf, we have every reason to believe that the men thus appointed would be highly successful in the accomplishment of the objects which the Holy Spirit has in view, while securing their appointment, rather than the object which some particular party may have in view, as is often the case where the selection of committees is left unattended to until some emergency arises, and those who may feel aggrieved concerning any matter are tempted to manipulate the process by which committees are chosen or councils are called, in such a way as to prejudice the minds of the committee in their favor. It will frequently be found that where no standing committee is appointed by an Association of Churches, and in those cases where no proper Scriptural means are taken to secure the election of those persons whom God has set in the body for the purpose of having them extend the fraternal greeting of the stronger churches to the weaker, and to assist them in their endeavor to build up the cause of Christ, the funds of the Convention are wasted, or worse than wasted for years in succession, mainly for want of a proper knowledge of those principles of New Testament polity which would be imparted by the persons whom God has set in the body for this purpose, if they were

placed in the positions which they ought to occupy. It is only a few years since the attention of the writer was called to a Church which, though located in a thriving community and worshipping in a very convenient and attractive house of worship, had been assisted by the Convention so long and with such poor results, that the chairman of the executive committee had advised the abandonment of the field. Others said that putting money in there was like tipping up sand in a morass, and yet that Church is now flourishing and is sustaining a mission also, that is more promising by far than the Church then was. It was found, on careful inquiry, that the Church did not own a dollar in the meeting-house—it having been sold at auction to satisfy the claim of the party who held the first mortgage. There was a brother living near by who had borrowed money and loaned it to the Church on a second mortgage who was then paying seven per cent. interest for that money, he having obtained it by mortgaging his dwelling-house. This man was then so poor that he could scarcely procure suitable clothing for his family to attend church. It took some time to get the members of that Church to see that, when that church edifice was bound over to this brother by the second mortgage, it was also bound over to him in heaven. Matt. 18: 18. And though the members of the Church could not at present pay off this obligation, they had no moral right to worship in the meeting-house while this brother was being defrauded out of his property. They could give, at least, a token of their sympathy for him and ask God to interpose in his behalf. And it also took some time to convince the brother that if he trusted himself and his claim in the hands of God, and worked for and with the Church, God would not be unmindful of him and his family and his claim. A token of sympathy was raised for him. Good feeling was restored. A precious revival followed, in which one or more of the members of his family were converted. The confidence of the community was regained and the churches in the Association afterwards took the matter up and an honorable settlement with this brother was made. Other instances might be named in which church property has been secured by means of the most unwarrantable violation of New Testament law, and sometimes by violating the laws of the State—where the members of churches are vainly

endeavoring to secure the aid and assistance of the Holy Spirit, without making any acknowledgment of the wrong which has been done to the rightful owners. But it is not of any sort of use to try to secure the coöperation of the Holy Spirit while endeavoring to build up churches whose members are guilty of such practices.

There are communities in New England where but few of the people attend church in consequence of the fact that many of them have lost confidence in professors of religion, mainly on account of the conduct of those who, though professing to be Christians, have shown themselves to be capable of violating the principle of justice in order to obtain the use of property which they know does not belong to them. It is the duty of the members of Baptist churches in this generation to correct the evils now existing in other denominations, rather than to copy these evils and incorporate them among the usages of our own denomination. And in order that we may accomplish the work which the Head of the Church has assigned to us, there should be a prayerful looking out of the men whom God has set in each Association of churches for the purpose of having them assist the members of feeble churches in carrying out the requirements of the great commission of Christ.

Committees appointed by the delegates of the Association in a perfectly Scriptural manner would not interfere with the independence of the churches in the least, but would bring precisely those influences to bear upon the members of such churches as need assistance which are contemplated in the great commission, and would be likely to secure prosperity. They would also be likely to place the members of such churches in full possession of the confidence and esteem of the people who dwell in the community round about the Church. In some Associations, a committee of the kind now under consideration is appointed from year to year. But very unfortunately, this committee is usually selected by the committee on nominations rather than by "the multitude of disciples," while each is acting under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit in answer to prayer. Where committees are appointed with the use of a committee on nominations, the persons who make the selection are very apt to depend upon their worldly wisdom rather than upon that wisdom which comes down from

the Father of light in answer to prayer. The Holy Spirit can not consistently become a party to any arrangement whereby the throne of grace is neglected, and the selection of candidates for office is transferred from the closet of prayer to the caucus room. Nor can he give his consent to those usages whereby the privileges of the multitude are taken from them and conferred upon a limited number of individuals. He does not want a portion of the members of any religious organization to talk one person up and another down for the purpose of determining who shall fill a given office. God knows what persons possess the proper qualifications. And if any one lacks wisdom concerning this matter, he wants them to come to him and not to go to each other to obtain it. If all will avail themselves of the privilege which he offers and will then record the names of such persons on the list of candidates as each one really believes to be in full possession of the proper qualifications for office, the Spirit of God will undoubtedly superintend the entire process of election and enable all to know whom God has chosen. And when all have ascertained who those persons are whom God has chosen, it ought to be sufficient. Whenever the members of a religious organization cease to repair to their closets of devotion for the purpose of seeking the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit when officers are about to be chosen, they virtually take the election out of the hands of the Holy Spirit and are in danger of placing the election in the hands of the adversary of souls. Hence the committee on nominations, as it now exists in many churches, ought either to be dispensed with altogether, or else it should be made the duty of this committee simply to report to the body the names of such candidates for office as have been nominated by the members of the organization while in their closets of prayer, with the view of having the body select the officers by ballot from among those who have received the larger number of ballots on the part of those whose nominations have been made in their closets of prayer. Neither churches nor Associations can afford to run the risk of grieving the Holy Spirit and doing without the assistance of the Spirit after the officers have been appointed, in consequence of neglecting to ask for the assistance of the Holy Spirit when about to make the selection of candidates.

Our churches have erred in this direction too long already in

many communities. We owe the present worldly policy of many of the Churches to the fact that, for many years the officers have been chosen with the use of a nominating committee consisting for the most part of worldly minded men. In some communities, this class of persons have made themselves so very prominent that a really spiritually minded preacher of the gospel cannot obtain a hearing before the Church when the pastoral office is vacant. And yet the fields where these churches are located are white for the harvest, and only need the pastoral care of men who understand spiritual things, and the temporary assistance of a few of the most devoted helpers from the stronger churches, in order to secure large accessions and ample means with which to support the gospel.

STRIKING INCIDENTS.

Some years ago, a pastor who was laboring in an important field on the seaboard, was requested by the secretary of the Convention to make an exchange of pulpits with a pastor who was laboring in an important field nearly two hundred miles inland. On arriving in the inland town, the pastor from the sea-shore soon found that the members of the Church, though enjoying the able sermons of their pastor, had failed to realize the importance of maintaining a high standard of piety in their homes, and were in the habit of holding no meetings with the view of developing piety in the homes of the people in any part of the parish. They had also failed to keep up a really efficient service in the official board of the Church. The finances had not only gone down, but the current of spiritual life had run so low that but few, if any, of the members seemed to be thoroughly alive to spiritual things. The Church reminded one of the body of an invalid, in which the joints were so stiffened by rheumatism that the limbs could not be made to act without pain. And when the limbs did act, the action was against the head. The disease might be very appropriately called a sort of spiritual rheumatism. The danger was that the arms of the patient would beat the head off unless relief was soon afforded. The week was spent in going from house to house talking and praying with the members of the Church, with the view of restoring good feeling and quickening the current of spiritual

life. Soon after returning home, the pastor on the seaboard had the pleasure of receiving a line from the pastor of the inland Church, thanking him for his kind offices and saying that, if he had been a repenting prodigal, his people could not have received him more cordially. It was not long, however, before the pastor settled down into his former habits of study and the brethren settled down into their habits of indifference, while not a few began to murmur and complain louder than ever before, in consequence of the general lack of interest which seemed to prevail throughout the Church.

It was quite evident that neither the pastor nor the members of the Church had any definite knowledge with regard to the divinely appointed method of managing the affairs of a Church. In the course of a few months there was a collapse which resulted in the withdrawal of the pastor. In the meantime such impressions with regard to the Church had gone abroad to the officers of the Association and the Convention, as led to a refusal on their part to render further assistance. It seemed for a while that the Church was doomed to become extinct, for it now had neither pecuniary resources, nor a standing in the community, nor a good reputation abroad. And yet it had a commodious meeting-house in the center of a thriving village with good out-stations in different parts of the town. At this juncture a call was extended to the pastor on the seaboard. On learning from the committee that they believed that the Church was moved by the Holy Spirit to send for him, he resolved to go there, trusting in God alone for success. While on the way, said a prominent clergyman, "Are you going to move your family there?" "Yes." "What, to that Church that never pays its ministers?" "Yes."

On arriving in the place it was soon found that most of the members knew nothing about financiering, and some of them cared less than they knew. The only condition on which further assistance from the Convention could be secured was that the debts be all paid. These were all assumed by the new pastor, for the simple reason that there was no one in the Church who was willing to become responsible for them. As cold weather was then approaching, money had also to be borrowed by the pastor for a new furnace. The pastor's wife was now taken sick and, in the absence of sufficient salary, he

was obliged to attend to household affairs as best he could with the aid of his daughter, then eleven years old. The members of the Church must also be carefully instructed with regard to those principles of the gospel which had been so sadly overlooked, ignorance with regard to which had brought on the present bankruptcy, both in spiritual things and in material things. At this juncture the pastor of a Church in the adjoining town made a call on the new pastor, in which he remarked that he had come to see if the—— Church was going to live. The new pastor looked up at him with a smile, and said, "The—— Church is alive now." Quite a series of revival meetings were held that autumn which resulted in quickening the members. But as a business crisis came on that winter, the debts of the Church were not all literally paid and the aid of the Convention was withheld, the officers no doubt thinking that the case was a hopeless one. The pastor had persuaded the brethren to appoint him assistant collector already, and was busily at work gathering in funds and paying off bills, and setting aside the large discount which the creditors made for the use of the Church with which to buy fuel. When assured that there was to be no more credit asked for by the Church, funds came in rapidly and very soon a praise meeting was held, in which the brethren thanked God that the Church was literally free from debt, now for the first time for many years. Great pains were taken to get the members of the Church to understand that God always sets the members in the body as has pleased him, 1 Cor. 12 : 18, and that the Holy Spirit knows who these persons are whom God has qualified for the different offices of the Church, and is both able and willing so to guide the minds of the members, when officers are about to be appointed, as to cause the members to unite in the selection of those persons who have been chosen by God. All were then instructed to repair to their closets of devotion and there ask for the assistance of the Holy Spirit to guide them, and then write down the names of those persons, and those only, whom each believed to be scripturally qualified to act among the board of helpers whose duty was to assist the pastor in caring for the various interests of the Church. Great pains were also taken to point out the difference between an advisory Committee of the Church, which is only a worldly device which is intended to mislead the pastor

in reality, by inaugurating a worldly policy which is sure to ruin the Church sooner or later, and a board of spiritually minded helpers, which is an institution of divine appointment, and is intended to assist the pastor in applying that heavenly wisdom, which is obtained by the united prayers of the pastor and his associates in office, to the different departments of labor in which the Church is engaged, by frequent consultation and earnest prayer and Bible study. After awhile nearly a dozen persons, male and female, were carefully selected in the manner herein designated, each member of the Church being taught to try the spirits by which his mind was influenced by the gospel test, and to strike off the names of such persons as may have been written down because they were relatives or partisans, and put on the names of those, and those only, whom each one believed to be Scripturally qualified for the office. The persons thus selected were frequently called together for prayer, and were taught how to coöperate with the pastor in whatever work the Holy Spirit seemed to urge the Church to engage in. Very unfortunately, when spring opened, the pastor of the neighboring Church, who had come in the autumn to see if the —Church was going to live, found his own Church so completely bankrupt that the members had to mortgage the parsonage and shut up the meeting-house, in order to pay him off. The new pastor was now obliged to take that field on to his hands also, and require his helpers to carry him back and forth once each Lord's day, while at the same time he was preparing the members of both churches for revival effort the coming autumn. But very unexpectedly means for family supplies had been so reduced before winter was over, that it became very difficult to go on without credit. At one time a bank bill placed in the hands of the pastor, when attending a funeral many miles from home, would not have been more thankfully received if it had dropped down out of the skies. It supplied means for bread for many days. As the season advanced, a series of fires occurred in town which inflicted so many heavy losses that it was supposed by some that the Baptist Society must become extinct. Its members suffered more heavily than the members of all other societies put together.

At one time a deacon in the Baptist church lost his barn and over twenty head of cattle. The pastor went into his study on

Friday evening and prepared a sermon on "God's interposition in great crises." This was preached on Sunday with great satisfaction to the people. Three solicitors were sent forth who gathered several hundreds of dollars in money, and laid it on the deacon's table with the hearty sympathy of the brethren and friends. When the next fire occurred, the Episcopal meeting-house was burned. One of its members said, "God does not want an Episcopal church in this town. He has allowed it to be burned down twice." Said the pastor of the Baptist church, "God does want a Baptist church here. I know he does, for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and the members of the Baptist Society have suffered more than all others by these fires."

Each of the other evangelical churches had its literary society of young people, with a course of lectures, which were prepared with the view of interesting the young people, the idea being that there was so little in the services of religion in these churches that was really interesting to the young people, that some worldly appliance must be resorted to in order to secure their attendance on the means of grace. These lectures began early in the season, and generally engaged the attention of the young so fully and so constantly that the subject of religion received but little attention from any one during either fall or winter. In very early autumn, this matter was brought to the attention of the board of helpers in the Baptist church, and they were made to see the absolute necessity of having seasons of fasting and prayer for an out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, in order that the people might become so deeply interested in the subject of religion that they would not need any worldly entertainments to interest them. A prominent Church in the Association had an evangelist in its employ. Word was sent to the pastor of that Church, asking for the services of that evangelist for awhile. The pastor of that Church had so little confidence in the members of the needy Church that he actually advised him not to come to their aid, but left it for him to do as he thought best about going there to labor. A second letter from the pastor of the needy Church soon brought the evangelist on to the ground. He soon found that God was in the midst of the little flock ready to bless, and that the Church, though small, was thoroughly organized with the best gifts which the

Holy Spirit could enable the members to select on the lead, while the members generally were ready to follow. The evangelist had scarcely begun his labors before God began to pour out his Spirit mightily. The meeting-house was soon filled to overflowing. The pastor's helpers kept him busy riding over four towns, talking with the anxious for quite a good while. The penny collections in the meeting-house soon amounted to ten or twelve dollars a Sabbath. At the end of four weeks, the evangelist returned to the large Church from whence he came, bearing the letters written by the young converts who had been blessed by his labors, and the result was the evangelist was sent back to labor in the adjoining town for a month. After preaching in the adjoining town every evening for three weeks, without any visible signs of revival, except the large assembly and the serious appearance of the people, it became evident to the pastor, who was in the habit of going down from the other town as often as possible, that the members of the Church in the neighboring town were looking idly on, waiting to see the awakening of sinners without realizing that it was necessary for them to act, while God was working in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. The evangelist became so discouraged that he was on the point of abandoning the field as hopeless. But the pastor knew that the field was white for the harvest. Several had risen for prayers in the household meetings months before. Returning home, the board of helpers and several young converts belonging to the other Church were taken down there to give the brethren a practical exemplification of what constitutes a live prayer-meeting. The ice melted. Several rose for prayers that evening. The revival moved on and swept into the adjacent town. There was one man there who lived on a large farm, who had become proverbial for his ungodliness. Knowing that he could not be induced to remain in the house to converse on the subject of religion, the pastor had spent an entire afternoon talking with him while picking apples by his side late in the autumn, when apples were in danger of freezing. As the revival moved forward, it was remarked by a prominent citizen that the minister will have that man in the water yet. Another man replied by saying, "There isn't power enough on earth to get him into the water unless you throw him in." And yet, on one of the very coldest

days in the month of February, he was the first person whom the pastor baptized with seven others in the open air, while the crowds of people gathered on the ice so thickly that the pastor had to beckon them off lest they should break in. In the month of March the interest was so great when the series of meetings were about to close that, in some instances, women literally waded through rivulets of water when going to church and sat by the stove to dry their feet. One-half of the indebtedness of the society, which was due on the mortgage given for money raised for the purpose of paying the former pastor, was contributed by the recently baptized converts. As might very naturally have been expected, the wife of the pastor found her health and strength so overtaxed, in consequence of the heavy strain that was put upon her while these meetings were being held in the two towns, that she felt obliged to retire for awhile and leave the interests of the two churches to be cared for by the pastor alone. The board of helpers had now learned to coöperate with vigor. The debts of both societies having been all paid and more than fifty persons having been added to the churches, it seemed as though some other preacher might now take the work up and carry it forward with comparative ease. Hence the pastor resigned, receiving very precious tokens of the good will of the people, and moving eastward to engage in a similar work in another field.

The reason why the pastor, who began his labors with the Church whose meeting-house and parsonage were free from debt at the time he settled, failed to succeed and left the Church bankrupt when he went away, was not because he had not sufficient ability, nor because he was not a Christian man. He had ability enough. But he did not understand the Scriptural method of organizing the working force of the Church, and hence failed to ascertain what persons God has set in the body for the purpose of conducting the members of the Church through the crisis. And instead of searching the Scriptures to find truths with which to cheer and encourage the members and show them how able and willing God was to care for them, he put so many discouraging things into his sermons that his preaching was like breaking the bread of life into a bowl of vinegar rather than into a dish of honey. The other pastor persuaded the members of the Church to rely wholly upon the

Holy Spirit in the selection of their leaders, and in this way secured the best gifts there were in the Church for helpers. Special pains were then taken to select those portions of the Word of God which would afford the largest measure of spiritual good cheer, for the foundation of sermons all through the crisis. And in the meantime, the pastor's helpers were brought into such loving contact with the people in the prayer-meetings and in their homes, that the current of spiritual life rose higher and higher until the members of the churches of other denominations said that they never saw Christians show such interest in each other as the Baptists did in the revival. After an absence of ten years, the pastor through whose efforts the two churches had been brought into a condition of prosperity returned to the field of his former labors to enjoy a brief visit. The churches had been enjoying the services of an able and very excellent minister during the intervening time, and but for the fact that the board of helpers had fallen into disuse, the spiritually minded members of the Church would probably have continued to bring the truths of the gospel into such vigorous contact with the hearts of the impenitent in neighborhood meetings and in the families of the irreligious, that a very considerable amount of growth would have been made in spite of the many deaths and removals. And had parents realized the importance of having seasons of special fasting and prayer in behalf of their sons when beginning to go astray, it is highly probable that several who had become patrons of the saloon would have become members of the Church and the future supporters of public worship. One of the most painful things connected with the work of building up feeble churches consists in the fact that the members so easily outgrow those very principles of Church polity which have been relied upon as the very foundation on which success has been achieved. No pastor could have taken those two churches and brought them from a state of bankruptcy into a condition of prosperity, who did not understand the apostolic method of organizing the working force of a Church. It was said by prominent members of the churches of other denominations, that the pastor and the members of the little Baptist Church did more work during the winter in which the revival occurred, than all of the members of the other churches. Whether this was true or not, it is certain that the

best gifts there were in the Baptist Church were brought into positions where they could keep in close touch with the pastor, so that he could concentrate the efforts of all of the members in whatever direction the cause seemed to require. It was partly owing to the completeness of the organization, that the Church was enabled to furnish such abundant supplies for the pastor during the period in which so many resources were cut off. The generosity of the people at that time was beyond all former precedent.

But for the timely aid rendered by the pastor's helpers and a few young converts from the neighboring Church at the time the evangelist became so discouraged, while preaching in the town where the Church had been obliged to mortgage its parsonage and shut up the meeting-house, it is highly probable that the doors of that meeting-house would have been closed for many years. There are communities in abundance where Sunday schools should be formed, and where feeble churches should be strengthened, and where the cause of Christ might be made to prosper abundantly if the pastors of neighboring churches could be made to see the importance of having the members of the churches over which they preside select, at least, a few of the very best helpers there are in the body and send their names to the secretaries of the State Convention and the Sunday School Convention, with the view of having them assist the pastors of feeble interests in times of emergency and in seasons of spiritual awakening. God only knows how many golden opportunities are lost for a whole generation, and perhaps forever, simply for want of this kind of assistance. Assistance of this kind is frequently far more important than the money that is appropriated by the Convention for the support of pastors.

THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS IN OUR CONVENTIONS.

One of the most unpleasant scenes connected with our anniversary meetings from year to year, is that which is presented by the moderator of the assembly while standing in the sacred desk and calling for the names of persons who are to serve on the Board of Directors in different parts of the State, while the delegates respond here and there in behalf of the different Associations the same as they would in a political Convention.

This custom implies either that there is a fearful lack of knowledge with regard to the divinely appointed method of selecting officers, or else that there is a singular oversight with regard to the interest which the Holy Spirit has in the work of the Convention. One would naturally suppose that if the delegates really believe that the Holy Spirit is more deeply interested in the work of the Convention than they themselves can be, or that the Holy Spirit has special regard for the example which was set by Christ at the time the apostles were chosen, and a better knowledge of the wants of the feeble churches in different parts of the State than the delegates to the Convention have, that there would be a spontaneous desire on the part of all to go into his presence and ask for wisdom from on high when about to select those who are to take charge of these important interests, and that this desire would be manifested in some tangible way, even if there was no instruction given in the Word of God concerning so important a matter as the selecting of officers. But when we call to mind the fact that the Son of God set us the example of praying all night long when about to select the apostles, and that the apostles were so particular to follow the example set before them, that it became an established custom among the early disciples to go into the presence of God and ask him to show whom he had chosen, when about to prepare their ballots and also when casting them into the common receptacle, it seems surprising that intelligent Christians should ever allow themselves to acquire the habit of substituting any worldly device for the divinely appointed method of selecting officers in a religious organization. The momentous interests which are to be cared for in those communities where the churches are feeble, and which are liable to be hazarded and lost at any time through the carelessness or inexperience of pastors or committees, would seem to require that all of the members of the body having the care of these interests should not only go into their closets of prayer in search of heavenly wisdom at the time that officers are about to be selected, but, while there, they should make a faithful and persevering endeavor to look out the very best men whom the Holy Spirit can enable them to select as candidates for office. There should be provision in the constitution and by-laws of all religious organizations, whereby all of the members of the

organization may follow the example of their Lord and Master when officers are about to be selected. We have no more right to take the act of selecting candidates out of the closet of prayer than we have to take the rite of baptism out of a pool of water. And we have no more right to substitute the action of the nominating committee for the action of "the multitude of the disciples" than we have to substitute the action of parents for the action of candidates in the ordinance of baptism. There is an unwarrantable oversight with regard to the importance of the assistance which the Holy Spirit may render, not only in the appointment of officers, but also in the collection of funds at our anniversary meetings. God's plan is to have the prayers and the free will offerings go together. And, in most cases, contributions that are really worth anything in supporting the various interests of a religious organization are accompanied by prayer on the part of the contributors. And, as a general rule, the Holy Spirit is now moving the hearts of the brethren to give just as large sums of money as they consistently can, with the present measure of prayer and consecration on the part of those who belong to the organization. To secure large contributions in the treasury, there is an imperative demand for more prayer on the part of those whose duty it is to contribute. And this prayer should be offered by the members of the churches in their own closets for the most part, during those days which are set apart for the express purpose of praying for the blessing of God to rest upon these various interests. And the Holy Spirit frequently waits for the prayers and for the renewed consecration of the members, with far greater solicitude than he does for the money. If it was an established custom among us, during the month preceding the anniversary meetings each year, to set apart one evening each week as an evening for prayer and conference in behalf of some one or more of the interests represented by the different societies, whose anniversary is to be held during a given week in the year, the simple fact that these objects are all to be remembered in prayer by the members of the churches, in their several places of worship, would be of incalculable benefit to the cause and to the members of each church. The practice of retiring to their closets of prayer sometime during the day preceding the evening meeting, for the purpose of asking God to show them how much money he wishes them to

contribute and what persons he wishes them to send as delegates to the coming Convention, with the view of casting both the names and the pledges into the common receptacle of the Church to which each person belongs, would add very materially to the interest which is now felt.

If pains should be taken by the pastors and delegates from each Church, when forwarding their contributions and pledges with the names of candidates for office, to send such information to the Executive Committee with regard to important interests as the exigences of the case might require, a vast amount of time now expended in fruitless discussion in the Convention might be saved and larger opportunity might be presented for the consideration of those interests which are of vital importance to the organization. Should the members of the churches devote the regular weekly meeting for prayer in one week of the month to the interests of the Convention, and the meeting in another week to the interests of the widows and orphans and the disabled ministers, and an evening in another week to the interests of the Sunday School and the Education Society, we should still have one week left in which to hold a meeting in behalf of "The Woman's Apostolic Union," which is an organization not yet formed, but which if it should be properly formed—and placed under the supervision of the pastors and the deaconesses of the churches, with the view of enrolling the female members of the churches under their divinely appointed leaders and keeping them busily engaged in the great work of Christianizing the homes of the irreligious and the immoral—they would be the means of reaching and saving hundreds and thousands of people who are not now reached by any religious organization. Where churches are strong and vigorous this kind of work can be done by the Church itself without any organization distinct from the Church. But one of our very greatest needs, at the present time, is an organization composed of the most pious and devoted women there are in the stronger churches, whose object shall be to assist the women who belong to the feeble churches in their efforts to Christianize that vast multitude of irreligious families, whose members are constantly filling up the saloons and brothels of the city, and the jails and prisons and insane asylums of the country. A very large percentage of the inmates of these different places might be saved from their sins and from

their sufferings, if the members of the churches were organized under their divinely appointed leaders, and suitable instructions were given to the members of the two sexes by pastors and by the deaconesses of the Church, in assemblies called for the express purpose of teaching the people how to avoid those evil practices which are now entailing so much misery upon families from generation to generation. The reason why God was obliged to destroy so large a portion of the human family by a deluge was not simply because the sons of God married those who were the daughters of men, and nothing more, but because marrying them in this way there was a neglect of family worship and an unwillingness to consecrate parental desire to God, and consequently a rapid increase of those forms of depravity which are easily transmitted from generation to generation. And the reason why the Holy Spirit forbade the members of the early churches to marry into ungodly families was not simply because it was sinful for them to marry in this way, but because of the fact that, when they did marry in this way, their offspring would be likely to be reared without the benefit of those hallowed influences which characterize the true Christian home. It is the belief of some that the tone of piety existing in Christian families in the days of the apostles was generally so high that the unbelieving wife was generally renewed and sanctified through the prayers of her husband, and the unbelieving husband through the prayers and heavenly adorning of the wife, and that children generally were converted in very early life through the prayers, and by the example and teaching of their parents. 1 Cor. 7:14. Be this as it may, there can be no possible doubt that it is possible to raise the tone of piety now existing in Christian families much higher than generally prevails, by directing the attention of the members of churches more frequently to those portions of the Word of God which pertain to the home institution, and by appointing meetings in dwelling-houses and in other places where worship shall be conducted for the express purpose of building up the cause of Christ in and through the home institution.

Nothing would be gained by the formation of a new organization for the purpose of building up the cause of Christ in the homes of the people, unless the organization is so constituted as to prevent the members from having their attention diverted

from the work which the Head of the Church has committed to the special care of Christian women. There are scores and hundreds of women who are now connected with the churches, who have practically withdrawn from the Church and from the work which Christ has assigned them, and have gone down from the plane of the spiritual on to the plane of moral, and are busily engaged trying to persuade the intemperate and the immoral to sign the pledge and lead good moral lives without exercising any faith in Christ. These women mean well. But they are singularly unfortunate in the choice of their leaders in very many cases, and are in danger of ruining the souls of the very persons whom they are trying to save, in consequence of the fact that they are working without that power by means of which all genuine works of grace are wrought. They are also grieving the Holy Spirit in many instances, in consequence of their unwillingness to rely upon him as implicitly as they should. Some will object to the formation of a new organization for the purpose of doing the work now under consideration, on the ground that we have more organizations now than can well be supported. But we could better afford to dispense with all other organizations now in existence, except the Church itself, than to do without an organization which shall enlist the sympathies of church members in the work of Christianizing the homes of the irreligious. There are many very grave questions now claiming the attention of both Christians and philanthropists. But there is no question before the people so important as the question, "What shall be the character of the homes of the masses?" We have only to settle this question in a Scriptural manner in order to settle many others. If we leave this question unsettled and the homes of the common people unchristianized, we make it impossible to settle many other questions in a proper manner for generations to come, no matter how assiduously we may labor nor how abundant may be the outlay which we make. We have a very important auxiliary to the Church in the modern Sunday School. But it may be safely questioned whether this institution, as now conducted, will compare favorably with the home assemblies of the apostolic age, which met in different parts of the town for worship and for Bible instruction, under the supervision of pastors and deacons and deaconesses during those parts of the Lord's day when the

people were not all assembled in one place for public worship. Those who acted as teachers and preachers in the home assemblies had a decided advantage over the teachers of the modern Sunday School in being able to expound the Word of God more fully than the Sunday School teacher now can, in its relation to the wants of the home institution. There are many topics which cannot be fully discussed in the modern Sunday School, which might very appropriately be discussed in private assemblies where the members of only one sex are present. The home assemblies of the apostolic age had a decided advantage over the modern Sunday School in having, for teachers, men and women who were carefully looked out by the members of the churches under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and were solemnly set apart by prayer and the laying on of hands. Consequently there was a sense of responsibility and of exalted privilege existing in the hearts of those who taught in those assemblies, which does not now exist among those who teach in the modern Sunday School, in very many cases. In some communities the superintendent of the Sunday School finds it almost impossible to secure teachers of any kind for different classes. Even Christian parents, in some cases, feel no particular responsibility with regard to the religious training of their children. They seem not to be aware of the fact that there is danger of grieving the Holy Spirit away from their homes, in consequence of their neglect of duty towards their children. Very much of this indifference and want of proper sense of obligation grows directly out of the practice of selecting both teachers and officers without seasons of special prayer for divine guidance, and without dependence upon the Holy Spirit. In many, perhaps in most of the Sunday Schools in our day, the officers, and in some cases the teachers, are chosen in precisely the same manner that officers are chosen in worldly organizations. And hence it not unfrequently is the case that very unworthy persons become either superintendents or teachers. The young are allowed to grow up without ever acquiring that high sense of duty or obligation to attend Church or Sunday School, which they ought to have. In some instances, they are taught from early childhood to select whoever they prefer for their teacher, and then are required to attend the Sunday School only when they choose to do so and are required to learn

their lessons only when they feel like learning them. The habit of having their own way and doing just about as they please with regard to the subject of religion becomes so fixed, that it is next to impossible for them to make an unconditional surrender of themselves to God in times of religious awakening. And hence, in many cases, they are not soundly converted at all. And in others, the habit of having their own way about everything becomes so fixed that it is next to impossible for them to yield a cheerful and willing obedience to the spiritual authority of the pastor, or whoever else the Head of the Church may have set over them in the gospel.

Instances might be given where Sunday School superintendents have been locked up in State's prison, or have been compelled to flee from their native land to avoid imprisonment. And many instances might be given where teachers have been obliged to give up their classes in consequence of their wrong conduct. God allows these things to occur in order to startle us and to remind us of our obligations to him, and to show us the necessity of repairing to our closets of devotion and asking him to show us by his Spirit whom he has qualified and chosen to be the teachers and guides of children and youth.

Even very young children can be made to see the difference between choosing their own teachers and going to God in prayer and asking him to show them, by his Spirit, whom he has chosen for them. And they can be made to feel that they are under more solemn obligation to learn and recite the lesson which the Sunday School teacher assigns them, than they are to recite other lessons. They can become more deeply interested in the study of the Bible and in performing their religious duties than they are in performing other duties, provided that the Spirit of God is poured out upon them and they have a good example set before them by parents and teachers. But it is not of any sort of use for either parents or teachers to try to interest children in spiritual things, while they themselves are interested only in temporal things and attend upon their religious duties only in a cold and formal way. And hence the absolute necessity of setting apart days for fasting and prayer for the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the children and youth, both in our homes and in our Sunday Schools, and for the assistance of the Holy Spirit while looking out those who are to serve as teachers

and as officers in the Sunday School. There should be one day in each year solemnly set apart by the members of every Church for prayer and for the selection of officers and teachers in the Sunday School. On this day every parent and every church member should repair to his closet of devotion and there ask God to show him by his Spirit whom he has chosen to fill these important positions, with the view of enrolling the names of all such as the majority of the members believe to be called of God to serve upon the list from which the superintendent may select teachers whenever their services are required. And the persons whose names are enrolled in this manner should be made to feel and realize that the members of the Church have recorded their names on the list because they felt that they were moved to do so by the Holy Spirit. This would tend to create a sense of duty and of obligation and of exalted privilege in the minds of those who now fail to recognize the fact that they are under obligation to teach, and would cause them to prayerfully consider the question whether they can consistently excuse themselves from teaching or not. Such days of fasting and prayer would quicken the sensibilities of parents and bring many of them not only into closer touch with the Sunday School, but into the Sunday School itself where they belong, and would keep them there. No greater nor more ruinous mistake is ever made by Christian parents than when they allow themselves to fall into the habit of supposing that they can consistently excuse themselves from attending the Sunday School under ordinary circumstances, because they have so many duties to attend to at home. There are exceptional cases, of course, but ordinarily the highest well-being of the family imperatively demands that the servants and the older children be taught to relieve parents of the larger portion of the cares and duties which some parents are in the habit of attending to, preparatory to church going, and give parents ample opportunity for attending upon the means of grace on the Lord's day. Some parents keep themselves and their children from being in the Spirit on the Lord's day, in consequence of not remembering the Sabbath during the week with the view of keeping it holy. In some cases they make both the means of grace and the common blessings of every day life a curse rather than a blessing, by refusing to recognize the Holy Spirit as their keeper and their guide during the week.

When the day of holy rest comes, they are not only completely jaded out in consequence of their excessive labor, but they are still in the world instead of being in the Spirit. And hence the members of our churches need no instruction so much, at the present time, as they need that kind of instruction which will show them precisely how to bring the fervent piety and ripe experience of those godly men and women who have been pre-eminently successful in building up Christian homes into those positions in the Church and in the Sunday School, where they will be able to make their power felt as leaders and guides to the people.

It is thought by some that a better selection of teachers and officers in the Church and in the Sunday School can be made with the use of a nominating committee than can be made by the "multitude of disciples" of which a Church or Sunday School is composed. But if this view is correct, it is certainly not a little remarkable that our heavenly Father did not discern this at the time that he brought his infinite wisdom to bear upon the matter now under consideration. And it is strange that the Holy Spirit does not find it consistent to bestow his power upon teachers and officers in such a manner as to secure a very high order of spiritual coöperation with their pastors when engaged in building up the cause of Christ, in those cases where his presence has not been sought for by the members of churches when officers were about to be selected. The writer has never known an instance, during the past thirty years and more, in which he has succeeded in persuading the members of any Church, no matter how discordant, to repair to their closets of devotion and there record the names of candidates for office in a scriptural manner and bring them forward with the view of having the question who shall serve in office determined by the Holy Spirit while presiding over the election, without securing a very high order of coöperation on the part of the board of officers when appointed. Even if it should prove true in any given case that the officers selected by a Church or a Sunday School are really less competent than those who might have been selected by a nominating committee, still we should expect these officers would be far more successful in the performance of their duties than those selected by a nominating committee would be, in consequence of the fact that the selection was made

by the members while honestly endeavoring to comply with the requirements of the Word of God and with a firm reliance upon the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is abundantly able so to assist the officers of any religious organization, even when deficient in certain qualifications, as to enable them to be highly successful in the performance of their duties. And where the members of the organization make an honest endeavor to secure the assistance of the Holy Spirit when about to select officers, they may very reasonably expect that he will be with them during the election and with the officers after they have been selected. But if the members of a religious organization do not ask for the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit when about to select officers, it does not matter how competent the persons who are selected may be, it cannot be reasonably expected that the Holy Spirit will guide and direct them in their endeavor to build up the cause of Christ. The lack of spiritual coöperation on the part of the official board, about which so many pastors complain, is traceable directly to the neglect of the members of churches and Sunday Schools to repair to their closets of devotion for the purpose of asking for the assistance of the Holy Spirit when about to select officers. And we are never going to see a change for the better in many communities until there is a change in the present method of selecting officers. If the view presented by the writer is Scriptural, the only proper course for us to pursue is to conform to the divine plan as faithfully as possible.



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